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NEW STATESMAN

The Treasury has an expensive model of the British economy. So far, it has mostly produced bad news. Jeremy Bray, MP, got access to it, and adjusted some of the instruments. And the model began to produce good news: even suggesting that high unemployment might not be inevitable after all.

REPORT ON PAGE 42.

James Fenton

How the CIA bolted from Saigon

Daily Mail

MONEY MAIL TODAY

Frightened, abandoned and waiting for its fate ... that is Saigon as 30 years of war reach a climax with a Dunkirk in the Sky

THE END

Europe on *how much* a day?

Gulag III: V. S. Pritchett on Solzhenitsyn

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Moscow drops the mask

In its persecution of Shcharansky and Ginzburg, not to mention its near-lynching of Yuri Orlov, the Soviet Union has stooped to the point of violating its own repressive penal code. Not even the formalities of a show-trial have been observed, and the various parodies of due process only emphasise the difference between this travesty and the real thing. Humanitarian outrage at the treatment of the accused is overshadowed by the realisation that they have been deliberately singled out because they demanded the adherence of their own government to a solemn treaty with the West. Claims by Soviet spokesmen that the whole thing is an 'internal affair' are even more grotesque than usual. So is the standard of judicial loutishness. The expulsion of Mrs Ginzburg from the court is only the most flagrant example. The Russian authorities are deliberately defying even minimal norms of conduct. These trials are a challenge and a warning.

They are a challenge to the spirit of Helsinki, certainly. They are also a warning, to all those in the Russian empire, that dissent will not be tolerated. In the next generation, Moscow will face a whole series of problems. It will have to find replacements for the old hacks who govern Eastern Europe – and the task will not be easy. It will have to find enough skilled manpower to keep both its arsenal and its industry growing – and projections indicate a shortage. It will have to contend with growing murmurs from the old 'prison house of nations', as non-Russian minorities collectively outnumber the Great Russian ruling caste. So, from Eastern Germany to the Ukraine, actual and potential dissidents have been served notice. The Soviet system cannot rule without repression.

This faces the European Left with profound problems. It will no longer be enough for the 'Eurocommunists' to criticise the USSR piecemeal, or to ask it to rule less brutally in order to save certain strategic votes in Tuscany and Marseilles. A more thorough-going critique will have to be mounted. Nor will it be possible to rely simply on 'human rights' pressure from the United States or from liberal opinion. Beyond a certain point, the Kremlin does not give a damn about its image. Appeals to its vanity will free the occasional unfortunate, but no more. The whole survival of Russian power is at stake, and its masters will certainly cling to it stubbornly. The present Carter strategy probably has very little life left in it – but socialists will have to carry on the battle whoever is in the White House.

The international repercussions are uniformly depressing. This kind of behaviour on the part of the KGB always strengthens the hand of the right wing of the State Department and the CIA, and it is a long time since anything useful emerged from them. Less often noticed, but equally momentous in its fashion, is the way that Soviet anti-semitism (of which the latest trials absolutely reek) becomes a justification for the intransigent Zionists around Menachem Begin. All those who favour 'tough postures', 'bush-fire interventions', neutron bombs, wheat boycotts and the rest of the disastrous cluster of Cold War nostrums, are winding up for the swing over the Shcharansky affair. They won't help him one bit, but they may make life more dangerous for everybody else. This is not to say that pressure should be relaxed. In areas where the Soviet Union is forced to permit free speech and exchange – chiefly scientific and technical – it should be made to pay a price for its treatment of the free intelligence. There seems no reason to indulge it, either, by staging an Olympic jamboree in Moscow in 1980. But the real test will come when a new generation of opposition arises, as it will despite endless difficulty, within Communist society. The Left must be ready to throw them a line.

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Notes on Politics and Power

Bonn's less than beautiful Summitry

John Palmer writes: The political inspiration behind the schemes discussed at the Bremen Summit is without doubt that of the European Federal State. The proposed zone of currency stability in Europe is but a first major step to full monetary union in Europe. Roy Jenkins, in Brussels, and Chancellor Schmidt in Bonn, know that a full monetary union could only be operational if there are increasing transfers of powers from the National to European Federal State. But why has it all come up now? Obviously the currency scheme owes much to the analysis of the economic crisis made by the devotees of Friedmanite monetarism. But its timing seems to be linked with the prospective enlargement of the European Community to take aboard three more Mediterranean member states – Greece, Portugal and Spain.

The enlargement of the EEC from nine to twelve, the West German leaders fear, risks a parallel weakening of existing Community rules and regulations. In a word enlargement could be used by the perfidious British as a vehicle for turning the Common Market into some loose, free trade association where political co-operation between sovereign member states replaces the drive to economic and, ultimately political, integration. The conclusion has been drawn that there may have to be a 'community within a community'. The rump of the old EEC – less Italy but possibly plus Denmark – now seems determined to opt for faster economic integration, starting with the currency scheme. This would obviously create a two-class EEC. An inner first class group with most of the economic and political clout, and an outer second class Britain – possibly without Ireland, Greece, Spain and Portugal. The latter would have a looser, increasingly ambiguous relationship with the central decision making institutions.

In theory the malevolent deflationary effects for Britain of currency links with the stronger EEC currencies (and, more importantly, the so-called 'monetary disciplines' that will certainly accompany it) could be offset. On paper they could in part be offset by a determined reflation of the West German economy and partly by a massive transfer of economic resources directly from the Federal Republic and the other richer EEC economies to the weaker economies such as Britain's. But to ask for this in present circumstances is to cry for the moon. Any new measures to expand the West German economy are going to be extremely modest – as Chancellor Schmidt will make clear at the Bonn Summit this weekend – and nothing will be done to 'put at risk' West Germany's extraordinarily low rate of inflation and the competitive edge this gives her industry on the eve of a recession. And while there was talk in Bremen and will be in the coming months in Brussels – about transfers of resources the political mood in the richer EEC countries is hostile. The coalition in Bonn is already under fierce attack from the right-wing opposition parties about suggestions that West Germany's EEC budget contribution should be increased and hints that policies such as the CAP – which tend to transfer resources the wrong way – should be reformed.

The present British strategy is to play for time. Callaghan had been hoping for great things from the Bonn Summit: a deal of reflation in exchange for strong US measures to curb oil imports and action by West Germany and Japan to reduce their massive foreign trade surpluses. Alas the seven leaders of the most industrialised nations will come to Bonn with their hands so tied by domestic political and economic pressures as to be unable to agree such a comprehensive bargain. In spite of continued optimistic noises from administration spokesmen Carter is nowhere near ready to impose an oil import tax. Schmidt is not only against substantial reflation on ideological grounds – he also has a hostile Bundestag and an ultra-conservative Central Bank in Frankfurt with effective veto powers. Fukuda would like to reduce Japan's current 14 billion dollar surplus but the slide in the dollar constantly wipes out the effect of efforts to restrain exports and boost imports. Callaghan and (soto voce) Giscard, do not want to give binding assurances they will not protect imports until they see hard and fast evidence of a global economic recovery.

A new world recession, however, is getting steadily closer.

Union money: the South African link

David Clark writes. It was another good financial year for the General and Municipal Workers' Union last year. But the political content of some of their investment and banking decisions leaves a lot to be desired.

The half-yearly report and balance sheet, which has recently been issued to the union's officials and covers the six months to the end of 1977, shows that membership has reached a record 945,324. Between them, the members had rather more than £17 million in the kitty. A healthy enough state of affairs – particularly for a union which is notoriously tardy in paying out strike pay – but it's one that bothers a number of the members since much of the money is invested in British companies with South African subsidiaries. And most of the liquid assets are kept with the union's main bank, our old friends Barclays.

In the last six months of 1977, for example, the best part of £800,000 was invested with 20 companies with extensive interests in South Africa. Fairly typical was the £78,322 put into ICI, which has 39 per cent of AECI, African Explosives, among its South African ventures. As the largest explosives manufacturer in South Africa, ICI obviously knew what they were doing by pumping in a further £26 millions just one month after Soweto. But did the GMWU membership?

Apparently not. The balance sheet shows that the union had £397,000 in its deposit account with Barclays and £155,000 in its current account. That compared with the total of just £170,000 held with the Co-op Bank. Yet when London Hotels Number Three branch put up a motion to the June conference condemning the policy of banking with Barclays, it was removed from the agenda after the regional delegates heard privately from the leadership that the policy was 'under review'. Hence, although the union has recently affiliated to Anti-Apartheid, it still has no official policy on pulling out of Barclays.

And it's all the more ironic that the GMWU is currently circulating a letter to branches from Len Murray. He reports the April TUC General Council decision that union representatives on company pension funds should exert pressure to get the funds invested only in companies which observe the official EEC Code of Conduct towards South Africa. The Code, by no means a radical document, is the latest attempt by the British government to introduce some minimal standards of trade union recognition in South African offshoots of British companies. Anti-Apartheid describe it as: 'doing nothing but give respectability to the operations of British companies in South Africa: it's a sick joke.' And since it's only just been circulated, after the ignominious last attempt collapsed, there's no way trade union representatives can know whether their company has signed it since there isn't a list.

The GMWU is apparently touchy about this issue. Their spokesperson explained that their investment policy is to ensure that 'none of the companies invested in had more than five per cent of their turnover in South Africa'. But five per cent at this end can easily mean a substantial slice at that end. 'The executive recognise the concern that was behind that conference motion,' said the spokesperson, 'and we will be examining our banking and investment policy as regards South Africa. We have attempted to minimise it and we will now be looking at that again.'

French Socialists: the Mitterrand succession

David Lowe writes: The outcome of last weekend's meeting of the Executive Committee of the French Socialist Party was a consolidation of the position of François Mitterrand as First Secretary. Proposals originally put forward by Pierre Mauroy, and backed by the left Ceres group to bring forward the bi-annual conference to this autumn collapsed. The 'contribution' published a few weeks ago by 30 of Mitterrand's supporters in the party leadership was overruled by Mitterrand's own statement which he read to the 131 member Committee. The 'contribution' had a divisive effect within the party entirely contrary to its intention. So though jostling for the party leadership continues, for the time being, Mitterrand's position is secure. To resign or to step down amidst the sound of the gnashing of teeth would do irreparable harm to party credibility and to Mitterrand's 'place in history', but it is unlikely that Mitterrand will be the party's choice as candidate in the 1981 Presidential elections. Defeat in the parliamentary elections this year has meant that the Left's chances of wresting the Presidency from Giscard d'Estaing are minimal: the occupation of key ministries would have been an immense advantage in a close-run campaign. Furthermore, the Communist Party has already announced its intention of presenting its own candidate – possibly Georges Marchais – which would divide the Left on the first ballot and enhance the chances of the incumbent President.

Mitterrand has no desire to be a three-time

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François Mitterrand: no more possibilities.

loser; hence the question mark concerning his successor. It is becoming increasingly likely that the post-Mitterrand leadership will be a collegiate one, as Gilles Martinet implied in an article in last week's *Nouvel Observateur*. Pierre Mauroy who is Mayor of Lille (the successor of Guy Mollet who led the old Socialist Party, the SFIO from 1946-69) is likely to maintain overall responsibility for the management of the party particularly since he also leads the powerful northern Federation a most solid and essential power-base. Michel Rocard, deputy in Yvelemes and Mayor of Conflous-Saint Honorine, is the most likely presidential candidate (he fought the 1969 election as leader of the PSU) but he lacks the organisational support required for supremacy within the party in the event of an overly divisive internal election. The loss of a 'party-leader identification' – the hallmark of the Mitterrand 'reconstruction period' – will also hit the party's chances of eventual electoral success.

By-passing issues in the Anti-Nazi League

Patrick Wintour writes: Red Saunders, a leading light in 'Rock against Racism' opened his speech or 'four minute loonie' as he described it by announcing: 'Frankly I don't give a shit what your line on Kronstadt is . . . love music and hate racism.' The 700 delegates to the Anti Nazi League's first national conference applauded and laughed. The benign reaction was a little surprising if you consider that the audience was dominated by the far Left a section of society that has probably discussed the lessons of Kronstadt a little more than the national average. However, non-sectarianism is the shibboleth of the Left these days and ANL with its 350 branches has been the prime example of this new popular front era. The paramount need to retain what Paul Holborrow, national secretary of the Anti Nazi League, described as 'unity in action' left untouched most of the central issues that should have been facing ANL at the conference.

The steering committee, at present co-opted, is not to face any election until after ANL's major drive at the October General Election. There was hardly any discussion of ANL's organisation of finances. No debate occurred on immigration controls nor was there any considered response to the Green Paper on nationality or the Select Committee report. Far too many speeches preached blandly to the converted, very few admitted that the ANL amounted to the white Left fighting the white Right. To be fair, ANL is becoming a victim of its own successes. It was initiated as an emergency measure after the Front's growth: a quarter of a million votes in the local elections and the pathetic Labour Party anti-racist initiative justified their finger in the dyke. Since then the NF's Nazi leadership and its hooligan membership has been persistently exposed. ANL has played its part in ensuring a high turnover, low quality NF membership increasingly prone to politically suicidal acts of terrorism.

Nevertheless, ANL intends to be very active indeed before the election against their traditional enemy. On 16 July there will be an attempt to take over the northern part of Brick Lane in the East End from which the NF sell their paper and from which many of the racist attacks emanate. The day after there is to be a strike in the East End as Black Solidarity Day. Next Saturday there is to be a northern carnival in Manchester, similar to the 80,000 strong Jamboree in Victoria Park. Chris Lightbown, the football writer is planning to organise a campaign among football fans to coincide with the beginning of the season (he pointed out that the skinheads are making a come back, the ones who thought Enoch Powell's warning of Rivers of Blood was a promise).

Giving a bare minimum of justice to the unemployed

It is no new thing to find civil servants juggling around with their terms of reference. But it makes a nice change to find them trying to do so with a humane objective in mind.

Not that the Supplementary Benefits Review, issued today after lengthy delays, is exactly a radical document. But it would have been even less so had the team of officials from the Department of Health and Social Security stuck rigorously to their instructions – which were to produce a totally cost-free solution to the fearsome problems which now beset our systems of poverty relief.

As a NEW STATESMAN article pointed out some months ago (The Crack-Up of the Unemployment Machine, 7 April) that system is failing because it was never meant to deal with the large-scale, long-term unemployment which has become an accepted part of present-day economic management. If the Government chooses to ignore the demands of this and other journals for a serious attack on unemployment, then the least it can do is guarantee some decent living income for those whom its policies deprive of work.

The core of the problem is that Supplementary Benefits – essentially a rejig of National Assistance – works through a complex system of rates and awards, many of them administered by discretion. It was, perhaps, adequate to administer the needs of a few hundred thousand claimants who had somehow fallen through all of the other safety-nets that society can provide. Growth in unemployment, and in numbers of single-parent families, has confronted the system with some three million claimants, a total which it cannot handle.

The only way to restore the system to order, and to prevent the sheer bureaucratic growth of the machine from becoming intolerably expensive in itself, is to simplify the structure of rates, and to make as many benefits as possible into payments of right, rather than payments by discretion. When the political instructions were issued last year, it was hoped that the civil servants would find ways of doing this without adding to the £1.5 billion cost of the Supplementary Benefits scheme. With an election approaching, a Labour Government is apt to be nervous of the allegation that it is lavishing money on 'scroungers'. But the truth of course is that if outright poverty is to be averted then any large-scale simplification must abolish the lower rates, rather than the higher ones.

The review team have searched diligently for cost-free improvements, and to some extent they have found them: notably, by designing a very simple procedure for short-term claims on the part of unemployed people. Even in today's depressed conditions, a majority of unemployed claimants are 'off the books' within an eight-to-thirteen week period: it is no use, from their viewpoint or anyone else's, to submit them to a finely-calibrated means test when all they need is a few pounds, dispensed by rough but speedy justice, to tide them over a bad spot.

And they have come down firmly against the whole principle of secret codes, available to officials but not the claimants. (Most of the notorious 'A-Code' has been exposed over the years by poverty-action groups, but the existence of secrecy still breeds cancerous resentment.) The Review suggests that the entire system must be capable of publication in a form similar to the Highway Code.

But they have gone further. By putting together a 'shopping list' of options which could only be met by spending money, they have provided a means to focus attention on some of the worst abuses of the present system – particularly, the injustice which springs from the growing divergence between *long-term* rates and *short-term* rates. There is, of course, good reason for giving people who need long-term support a higher rate, because they must have some excess over their hand-to-mouth needs if they are to maintain a stable home. At present, the short-term basic rate for a married couple without children is £23.55 per week, and the long-term rate is £28.35.

But under the present system, the unemployed never qualify for long-term rates — despite abundant evidence that in areas like the North-East, where vacancies for unskilled jobs are massively over-subscribed, the chances of finding a new job decline steadily the longer a claimant is out of work. The review team's estimate is that it would cost £70 million to give all claimants – including the unemployed – the long-term rate after one year on the books. It seems a minimal piece of social justice in a high-unemployed economy, and it could be put into effect without any special legislation.

Bruce Page

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Mike Phillips: A key constituency's many-sided character

To the south and east of Moss Side, Conservative support is solid. No need to knock on the doors to find out. Barlow Moor Road, coming down from Chorlton Park, is lined with prosperous suburban houses, each one standing in its own neat garden; and in each neat garden for what seems like miles and miles, along both sides of the broad streets, is planted a placard in deep Conservative blue – 'Tom Murphy To Win'. Nearby at the southeast corner of the constituency, just within its borders at the junction of Princess Road, is where the NF have chosen to make their stand. Indeed they can hardly have got off the motorway before driving their transit van into the welcoming forecourt of the Princess Hotel.

You have to go about a mile down Princess Road, towards the centre of Moss Side, to find the headquarters of the WRP, an old shop front plastered with pictures of their famous candidate. This is one part of central Moss Side which hasn't yet been completely rebuilt, and that stretch of road is bordered by crumbling shops, derelict houses and patches of urban desolation.

To the west of Princess Road, over behind Alexandra Park, is a tract of private housing, just new enough to have escaped demolition, just old enough to look grimy and unfortunate. There's only a sprinkling of blacks, and lots of corner shops and off licences. The Conservative HQ is here.

Further to the west, where Whally Range meets Stretford and Old Trafford, there is another stretch of private housing, older and more genteel, many of them large enough to be converted into institutions like the Conservative Club or the Polish Centre. In between these are streets of mixed council and private housing. The Liberal candidate has his headquarters in one of these – which is symbolic of an exile both geographical and political. Since the community workers of the Hulme People's Rights Centre were evicted from their base in the high rise estate, most of them have roundly denounced their former leader Thomson as a political opportunist, and have been urging people to vote against him. Hulme is the geographical centre of the constituency, and the key to any sizeable changes in its voting patterns.

Hulme is a high rise, deck-access complex of flats, which was the central feature of the city's postwar slum clearance programme, and there is now a general consensus within the area that it was a complete failure. Even George Morton, the Labour candidate, concedes it was a mistake to house families in Hulme. But Hulme is an albatross that Labour finds it hard to shrug off. The Labour Club stands close to the Crescents, generally regarded as the worst part of a bad estate; its sweating walls, defective lifts, and the windswept concrete decks, are a constant reminder to the neighbourhood that Labour was responsible.

This is the sense of disillusion which the Liberals and Conservatives are hoping to exploit electorally. On the other hand, the late Member, Frank Hatton, was well known and liked within his constituency; and his lieutenants had been practising for years the kind of community involvement of which the Liberals now boast. Labour councillor, Pat Paget, for instance, was not only always accessible; you were always falling over him or his bicycle around the area. Towards evening if you were having a cup of tea in the flats and you heard a strange knock, and it wasn't the insurance or the HP, it would be Pat Paget chasing up complaints. Such men commanded an unshakable base of local support, which remained practically untouched by the style of the community work young lions. In fact, by the time Thomson's Rights Centre became a focus in Hulme, the long established Labour people were being moved out into the pleasant one-story estates which were built after the original high rises. Thomson's clients were new people, whose voting habits couldn't be relied on, and the battle for Hulme was concerned not with holding or eroding the Labour vote, but with gaining new votes among the lumpen new arrivals.

The blacks and immigrants are a crucial element in this battle, and it is a demonstration of their importance that all the candidates have been at pains to point out that there are no racial issues involved.

It is true that racial tension on the Brick Lane model is absent. West Indians in Manchester have had the reputation of being dangerous people to molest, ever since the early forties when American soldiers, objecting to blacks using the same dance halls, were fought to a standstill by the West Indian servicemen in the town. On the other side of the coin, interracial marriage has meant that large numbers of black people in the area are related in one way or another to their white neighbours. In addition, after the wholesale clearance of the district, many black people have stronger roots in Moss Side than the whites. All these factors make communal strife unlikely. However, black people in Moss Side suffer from, and resent, just as they would in Brixton or Handsworth, educational problems, the poorer housing and higher rates of unemployment.

As a result of the deafening silence from the main parties on these issues, the black organisations in Moss Side constructed the Black Peoples' Political Alliance, partly to defend the neighbourhood from the Front, and partly to dramatise the racial issues in the election. Combatting institutional racism is regarded as the more important aim, since no-one expects the Front to march through Moss Side. A measure of the Alliance's difficulties in pursuing that aim is that, at last weekend's open air meeting, the only danger to its good conduct came from the Anti Nazi League, whose members repeatedly tried to break it up, ignoring and abusing the black speakers, in an attempt to push the blacks into going to Chorlton and attacking the Front. The organisers saw their manners as racist and their tactics as designed to identify the Alliance with the hooligan fringe of white politics.

In fact the position of the Alliance's headquarters in St. Mary's, one of the few buildings to survive from the old Moss Side, and smack in the middle of the constituency, reflects its centrality to the area. Appropriately, it is seeking to demonstrate that the issues of race are central to the political concerns of a large part of the electorate. If it can mobilise even a proportion of the 15 per cent of black voters around those issues, it will represent a formidable new electoral element.

Labour's majority is certain to be reduced. But taking a view from the centre of the constituency, no one has yet mounted a challenge strong enough to rob Frank Hatton's heirs of his legacy.

STUDENTS

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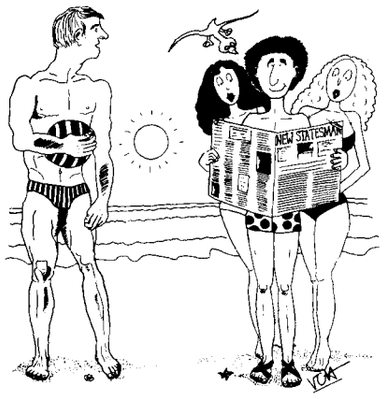

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The withering-away of the National Front's grass-roots

Great political alarm was expressed over the National Front's boast in 1976 – repeated recently in the context of a World in Action exposé – that it would field 318 candidates in the General Election. Recently the NF has been talking more modestly of 250 to 300 candidates. CHRISTOPHER T. HUSBANDS, a sociologist who is directing a large-scale study of NF support, reports that there is in reality little chance that the Front can achieve even its reduced target.

What has not been analysed in the extensive press comment on the National Front's poor performance in the May '78 elections is the evidence these offer about the grass-roots organisational strength of the NF throughout the country. This is a critical matter in assessing whether the NF can meet its general election target. Because NF branches and groups throughout the country are encouraged by headquarters to fight local elections, the number of seats contested at this level is a good index of the scale of local activity.

Of the 635 constituencies electing MPs 516 are in England, 36 in Wales, 71 in Scotland, and 12 in Northern Ireland. If the NF is to have even 250 candidates, all or almost all are going to have to be fighting English seats. Only once has the NF ventured into Wales in a parliamentary election; in the 1970 general election its candidate won 2 per cent of the vote against Mr Callaghan in Cardiff South-East. The only parliamentary election excursion into Scotland by the NF was in October 1974 at Glasgow Govan, where an abortive attempt to woo the Orange interest gathered just 86 votes. Despite the widely publicised claim by the NF in 1977 to be establishing an organisation in Scotland, it ran no candidates in the Scottish Regional elections of 2 May 1978, although one might have expected to see the odd candidate in Lothian or Strathclyde Regions if the NF were at all viable in Scotland.

There seems little likelihood of the NF wanting or being able to intervene in any of the Northern Ireland constituencies; it has hitherto shown some overt doctrinal sympathy with the Unionists, with whom it would have to compete if it fought there. Even if some credit is given to the NF for an organisational presence in Scotland that it probably lacks – to the extent of being able to run, say, two or three candidates there – it still has to fight almost 50 per cent of the 516 English seats to be able to achieve its target.

The local elections in England in May took place in the thirty-two London Boroughs (in which all seats were at stake), in the thirty-six Districts of the six metropolitan counties (where a third of council seats were contested), and in the forty-four non-metropolitan Districts of the 296 in England that chose at the time of local government re-organisation in 1974 to elect their councils by thirds. These areas together comprise 297 full (or, in a small minority of cases, partial) English parliamentary constituencies. Only 140 (47 per cent) of these contain one or more wards with contests featuring a full or partial NF slate on 4 May. Only in London, especially inner London, the West Midlands and West Yorkshire did the NF's coverage equal or exceed the percentage it must attain in the country as a whole if it is to achieve its present claim of general election candidacies.

In Greater Manchester it managed only a one-third coverage. In the other metropolitan Districts and particularly in the non-metropolitan ones its candidates were very infrequent.

In Greater Manchester and West Yorkshire it managed from a third to a half coverage. In the other metropolitan Districts and particularly in the non-metropolitan ones its candidacies were very infrequent. In Merseyside and in Tyne & Wear it was scarcely a presence at all, as the number of wards it was able to contest in these areas (also shown in the table) makes especially clear. In South Yorkshire it was confined to miserable electoral performances in the District of Rotherham. In the non-metropolitan counties almost the entire representation of NF candidacies was in Districts in Hertfordshire and in Preston in Lancashire.

NF local organisation is not arranged entirely according to parliamentary constituencies, as is that of the major parties, and it might be claimed that numerous uncovered constituencies could in the general election be colonised by activists from neighbouring constituencies in which NF organisation is active. Such a point has little merit.

Complete lack of coverage of the constituencies in the Boroughs of Ealing and Kingston-upon-Thames or of the constituencies of Richmond or Bermondsey in London and of Warley West in the West Midlands might be plugged by activists from adjacent areas. Against this consideration, however, one may reasonably doubt whether certain constituencies where merely an isolated ward was contested in the 1978 local elections will really be able to mount a Front candidacy in the general election. Will the NF manage a candidate in Swindon, for example, in whose only contest featuring the NF it received 39 votes? The hurdle of finding £150 per candidate makes it likely that numerous constituencies with isolated NF representation in the local elections will not have NF candidates in the general election, unless the NF can find large numbers of ingenuous individuals around the country willing to exchange £150 for a little transient notoriety.

Undoubtedly, the extensive coverage of London in the 1977 GLC elections, when 91 out of 92 constituencies were fought, was possible only because no deposit was required. On the basis of the latest round of local elections the NF stands a realistic chance of saving its deposit only on Hackney South and Shoreditch, and it may have an outside chance of doing so in the two Tower Hamlets constituencies.

Because the local elections were concentrated in the areas of NF strength in London and the conurbations, its 47 per cent coverage is clearly a considerable overestimate of the proportion of seats it could fight in England as a whole. In addition to the seats included in the figure of 140 constituencies in the table, it might also be able to contest the three Leicester seats, Blaby, Bosworth, Harborough, Loughborough and Melton in Leicestershire, perhaps four or five Bristol seats, Gloucester, and a couple of the Plymouth area seats in the West Country, Eton and Slough and Wycombe west of London, Accrington, Blackpool North and South, Blackburn, Darwen and the two Fylde seats in Lancashire, and assorted others in various parts of the country. On that basis it would be unlikely to contest more than 170 seats in England as a whole – more, of course, than one would wish to see, but far away from the 318 that John Tyndall once hoped for.

Where can the Front risk fielding candidates?

	WARDS		CONSTITUENCIES	
	Number with NF slates	Percentage of total	Number with one or more wards with NF slates	Percentage of total
London				
Inner and Outer boroughs	263	35	73	79
Metropolitan counties				
Greater Manchester	27	13	13	36
Merseyside	3	3	3	14
South Yorkshire	7	8	2	12
Tyne & Wear	3	3	2	12
West Midlands	73	43	24	73
West Yorkshire	46	36	14	48
Non-metropolitan counties				
44 English districts	33	5	9	14
TOTAL	455	20	140	47

The likelihood of the National Front fighting parliamentary seats can be judged by the level of its activity in each constituency during local elections. The table shows where the Front put up slates in the London Borough and District Council Elections of 4 May 1978. The figures include both full and partial slates: in many wards the Front failed to contest all seats. A few constituencies overlap boundaries between districts, so are counted twice.

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Cracking open the secrets of the Treasury's black box

It seems likely that Dr Jeremy Bray, mathematician, former ICI executive, now Labour MP for Motherwell, has made a major advance towards the democratic management of economic policy. Central to the mystique in which this process is clothed is the Treasury Model of the British economy: a complex intellectual device which is used, with a computer, to test and to justify Whitehall's economic decision-making. Results of work done on the model play a large part in Whitehall's acceptance of the inevitability of unemployment: in the Labour Government's acceptance of stark monetarist disciplines. But like all 'black boxes', the results that the Treasury Model will give depend a great deal upon the assumptions put into it. In 1975 Dr Bray moved successfully an amendment to the Industry Act which made the details of the model's construction available to researchers outside the Treasury. Last year, a Commons committee provided funds for MPs to run their own programmes with it – and Dr Bray has just completed the first such exercise. His basic discovery is that fairly modest changes in policy assumptions produce from the model results which suggest that an alternative economic policy is perfectly viable – one which would be capable of reducing unemployment by one million over the next four years. This fall in unemployment could be accompanied by increased personal prosperity, and by increased spending on public services. In other words, the economic straitjacket in which we currently live is one entirely of our own – or anyway, Whitehall's – making. So far from needing to look towards Bonn for a miracle, we ought to be able to organise our own salvation. It is, of course, possible for the Treasury to dismiss the whole of Dr Bray's argument as fanciful or over-optimistic. But it is hard for them to do so without attacking the credibility of the model on which they rely themselves. Dr Bray's argument is that the mandarins at the head of the Treasury – concentrating, as always, on short-term, conventional solutions – have failed to understand the implications of what their back-room researchers have done, and as a result have failed to give the Government the ammunition it needs to combat reactionary pressures from the International Monetary Fund and elsewhere.

If I were to propose as a serious alternative economic strategy aimed at reducing unemployment by a million in four years, a managed devaluation of 10 per cent, a simultaneous cut of £1 billion in income tax, and increases phased over four years of £5 billion in public authorities' current expenditure, and a temporary increase in corporation tax while profits rose rapidly following devaluation, the suggestion would be dismissed out of hand. If further I argued that this would strengthen the balance of payments, would leave real disposable income intact, would not increase public sector borrowing, and could offer instead of increasing public current expenditure, the option of increased leisure for everyone, paid for by cuts in employers' national insurance contributions, it would not help the credibility of the package. Yet these are the suggestions that emerge from the Treasury model of the economy in the first independent exercise conducted by an MP.

There are many possible objections – including fashionable objections to the validity of econometric models as such – which I will examine in detail later. But first let me put some general points.

The Treasury tends to produce instant packages, rather than economic strategies. There are people in the Treasury capable of evolving strategies and testing them for technical credibility, but they rarely have the opportunity to advise Ministers direct. Ministers themselves do not examine the technicalities of the forecasts and schemes which are put before them: so far as I know, no Minister has been able to carry out an exercise like the one reported here. More surprisingly, neither has the TUC, the CBI, or any other pressure group – although since 1975 they too have had access to the Treasury Model. For all the rhetoric about alternative economic policy, there has been little willingness to undertake hard technical investigation.

Let me describe how such an exercise is carried out. The Treasury model produces forecasts of some 900 quarterly variables. A base forecast is prepared, stretching a little further ahead than the longest term effect of a policy you wish to consider. (I used a post-budget revision of the six year forecast published in *The Economist* on 8 April.) Difference tables are then prepared showing the effect of changes in single policies, like a 10 per cent devaluation, or a cut of £1 billion p.a. in income tax. For each of these difference tables it is sufficient as a first step to use a forecast summary of some 50 variables in all. The ones I looked at mainly were the effects on gross domestic product, the current balance of payments, the retail price index, real disposable income, the public sector borrowing requirement, unemployment and the net acquisition of financial assets by the personal, companies, overseas, and public sectors.

To a first approximation, single policy changes can be combined in a strategy making different sized changes in different policies at different times and simply adding up the effects. Combinations of policies are juggled to achieve the effects desired. Doing this manually as I did it, and as it is done in the Treasury, it is possible to consider only simple strategies. When an apparently satisfactory strategy is obtained, a full forecast is prepared on the computer showing the combined effect of all the policy changes, which is not quite the same as the sum of the separate changes. (A better way is to think first of objectives which might turn out to require rather complicated strategies. But this requires the apparatus of control theory – not yet installed on the Treasury model.)

We have to escape from the familiar box – the balance of payments, inflation and so on. Recent Treasury studies have suggested, on the latest evidence, that devaluation does in fact offer a way. I therefore made it my starting-point.

The devaluation and reflation it makes possible should be big enough to reduce the level of unemployment by quarter of a million a year for four years. Sufficient of the reflationary action should be in cuts in direct taxation (and increases of benefit), to compensate employed persons and pensioners for the increase in the rate of inflation, making it an achievable requirement that no greater strains would be placed on incomes policy than would be there without the package. However not all the reflation should be by cuts in direct taxation, because the reduction of unemployment achieved in this way is far less than for equivalent increases in public authorities' current expenditure. Cuts in direct taxation lead to higher savings. Much of what is spent goes on imports. Of home products consumed, much is produced by existing labour. Of new labour, a lot is not recruited from the unemployed. This is still partly the case with increases in public investment. Increases in public current expenditure are mainly on wages and salaries, and have to cover only the difference between wages after tax, and unemployment benefit. So the biggest employment effects are achieved by increasing public current expenditure. Table 1 compares the effectiveness in reducing unemployment of cuts in direct taxation, increases in public investment, and increases in public current expenditure.

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The cost of reducing unemployment by one person* (£)

Method	Cost of direct tax cuts	Increase in public sector investment	Increase in public sector current spending	Increase in balance of payments deficit	Increase in Public Sector borrowing requirement
DIRECT TAX CUTS					
Year 1	91,000	—	—	14,000	71,000
Year 2	42,000	—	—	16,000	34,000
INCREASE IN PUBLIC SECTOR INVESTMENT					
Year 1	—	38,000	—	18,000	30,000
Year 2	—	22,000	—	16,000	16,000
INCREASE IN PUBLIC SECTOR CURRENT SPENDING					
Year 1	—	—	9,000	2,100	3,100
Year 2	—	—	7,500	1,800	2,600

*Assuming no changes in Treasury models' existing forecast for earnings or the exchange rate.

1

Above, one of the problems of the British economy which Dr Bray's work has unearthed. The Treasury model shows the most popular policy changes are the most expensive way of reducing unemployment. Right, a policy package which could free the economy from such constraints.

An alternative strategy: its differences from base forecast

POLICY CHANGES:

2

a. Devaluation of pound by 10% in 1978(4), i.e. 4th quarter.
b. Direct taxes cut by £1 billion p.a. (current prices) in 1979(2).
c. Public authorities current expenditure increased by a further £500m. (1970 prices)* in each of 1979(2), 1980(2), 1981(2) and 1982(2).
d. Corporation tax increased †
   for 1979/80 by £1300m. p.a. (current prices)
   for 1980/81 by £1300m. p.a.
   for 1981/82 by −£300m. p.a.
   for 1982/83 by −£1200m. p.a.

CONSEQUENCES ACCORDING TO TREASURY MODEL:†

	GDP %	Retail price index %	Real personal disposable income %	Companies' after tax profits‡ £m (current) per annum**	Public sector borrowing requirement £m (current) per annum**	Current balance of payments £m (current) per annum	Unemployment thousands
1979(4)	+2.2	+3.2	−0.4	+400	0	+1300	−210
1980(4)	+4.3	+3.7	1.0	+300	0	+2500	−450
1981(4)	+5.9	+3.9	2.1	−200	0	+2700	−640
1982(4)	+6.8	+4.2	2.7	−100	0	+3100	−760

* Approx £1,300m. at 1978 prices.
** For financial year 1979/80 etc.
† Changes relative to base forecast.
‡ Actually, companies net acquisition of financial assets.

The higher rate of growth achieved is sufficiently good for company profits, to allow increased company taxation to eliminate the increase in the public sector borrowing requirement while still leaving increased profits after tax. Exporting and import saving companies would still make handsomely greater profits after tax, while other companies would be squeezed, giving a powerful incentive to get into exporting and to stay there. Likewise a premium would build up with higher wages in exporting firms, enabling them to attract the labour they need: an incomes policy which could not accommodate this would frustrate the whole strategy. The devaluation itself, under the conditions of this strategy helps to reduce the public sector borrowing requirement by stimulating the growth of the economy.

The managing of the devaluation of the pound by 10 per cent should be adequately assisted by the announcement of the reflationary strategy. Some might argue that this would cause a greater devaluation, others that the offer of cheap pounds would be attractive enough to push the exchange rate up again, and others still that the strategy would confuse markets and make it more difficult to achieve any desired trajectory for the exchange rate at all. Somewhere in between it should be possible to achieve something like the desired devaluation. The Bremen proposals would plainly be important here.

Many might feel that concentrating domestic reflation on public authorities current expenditure is not the right priority. There is an urgent need to increase staffing in hospital wards closed for lack of nurses, in schools in deprived areas, in social work in some cities. But while old people would like more visits from the chiropodist, they do not want him coming round three times a day. And there is a limit to the attention most people would appreciate from their friendly neighbourhood tax inspector.

Rather than increase public employment by half a million or more (one thousand in each parliamentary constituency) the equivalent economic effect could be achieved by using the money to finance alternatives to work as traditionally understood. The possibilities include reducing the working year, more options for early retirement, and increased in-service training or continuing education in adult life. The TUC want a reduction of the working week. The Department of Employment favour more options for early retirement. Another option is longer holidays, with the extra time staggered. The Department of Education and Science are trying to propagate the idea of continued education in adult life. Ministers and the CBI fear additional costs with little unemployment. No-one, however, has asked what is the best package made possible by a sum building up to £5 billion per year over a period of four years. Yet that is both a realistic estimate of the cost, and of the money that could be made available in a comprehensive economic strategy to reduce unemployment by a million over four years. Table 2 gives the numbers that emerged from the Treasury model for the implementation of such a policy.

Many people would object that economic models, particularly big ones, are useless. If that is really so, one might ask why the Treasury has spent a great deal of time and money evolving one. But if one is to understand this objection properly, it is necessary to explore some characteristics of the economics profession.

Among economists there are different tendencies, a better word than schools,

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which suggests something too rigid and organised. The monetarist tendency will tend to believe the best you can do is to control the growth of the money supply, and let unemployment take its course. Of any particular tendency, monetarist, Keynesian, neo-classical or what have you, there will be one or more economists whose forecasts have seemed to fit events reasonably well in the last few years. A monetarist will have picked out the particular definitions of money supply, inflation, treatment of the exchange rate and so on, which turn out to fit events. For a short while they will be paraded by the apologists for the tendency – journalists, politicians, lobbyists, civil servants. But then their forecasts and, if they are listened to, their prescriptions will begin to go wrong. They will themselves have no difficulty in inventing a new factor or consideration to explain each new departure from their previous expectations. But they will be discredited, and will no longer serve to represent the tendency. The apologists though, will be unabashed. They will pick another prophet.

But there could be a more rigorous test, or rather whole layers of increasing rigour. One would be to require not just prior predictions of recent events, but a predicting scheme which if applied with only the knowledge available in successive past years, would have predicted subsequent events with error distributions specified in advance.

In statistical jargon, these are 'outside sample' tests. Such is the sogginess of economic writing accepted by the editors of economic learned journals that even this elementary discipline is seldom required of economists, let alone their apologists. It would put too many of them out of business.

The first step however is to offer some sort of predicting scheme. Mathematical modelling schemes are capable of objective definition and test. The facts used and predicted are numbers: exchange rates, prices indices and so on, varying over time, or time series as they are called. Such time series represent complex and varied behaviour by millions of thinking agents. They are fraught with human values. But this very complexity causes plain language to collapse at attempts to describe even elementary concepts in the relations between two or three of these time series, in a form susceptible to tests of predicting power. How can you describe (let alone find) the effect of an exchange rate, distributed over a period to an uncertain and variable extent, on the domestic price level, in a non-vacuous way susceptible to test, without becoming rather mathematical? And the mathematics required is more than O-level.

At once this raises cries of 'Foul'. To require such discipline would rule out those phalanxes of Philosophy, Politics, and Economics graduates who populate Cabinets and write for the newspapers, but giggle at the sight of an elementary regression equation. What impertinence to suggest that the vital concerns of the unemployed, the sick, the poverty stricken overseas can only be handled by a technocratic elite. *Yet this protest comes from just such a technocratic elite, of PPEs of all parties and none, caught out in their inability to handle the problems with which they profess to deal, degrading the very concepts of representation, trusteeship and integrity, which they call in aid to justify their priestly role.*

And is what I am talking about here, with all its flexibility and transparency and open-ness to negotiation, in fact elitist in operation?

The more numerate, even among PPE graduates, have no difficulty in pointing out the shortcomings of existing models. Many parts of them have failed the predicting system tests, or they have not been tested at all. But more attention to the structure, lags and uncertainty of relationships does increase the number of relationships where the probability distribution of forecast errors is now correctly estimated.

Models, in other words, cannot be perfect. But they are improving, and they have a well-established role in the making of economic policy. But of course, even if that is accepted, many other objections remain to be dealt with.

1. **Existing models disagree on the effects of the proposed policy.** The Treasury model certainly shows a much larger and longer lasting devaluation effect than the National Institute and London Business School models. These effects were compared in the February 1978 Economic Review, but the differences were not fully explained. The Treasury modellers are fairly positive about the relative strength of their arguments, and the effect in the Treasury model has been explored in a published Treasury Working Paper. Certainly the method of wage determination plays an important part and the National Institute and the London Business School have no more satisfactory wage equations than the Treasury. In the exercise I carried out, the strategy is to make no change to real disposable incomes from the course it would otherwise have followed and to rely on trade union co-operation to avoid the acceleration of inflation.

A technocratic elite of PPE graduates are caught out in their inability to handle the problems they profess to deal with.

However the difference is not explained only by the wage equation, and I would like to see an exhaustive comparison of the import and export demand equations to track down the reasons for their differences. The London Business School modellers admit their work is based more on their view of how the economy works, than on any impartial attempt to see what the evidence suggests. The estimation methods so far used in the National Institute and the London Business School could not distinguish very well between a long term secular decline of competitiveness in British industry and the longer-term response to a decline in the exchange rate. The effort put into maintaining the Treasury model is as great as that put into all the other public short-term models of the UK economy put together. And it shows.

2. **Others have put forward related strategies.** Bryan Gould MP has been arguing steadily for devaluation, but the government, the TUC and Tribunites have been uneasy about its effect on the cost of living in the short term, and dubious about its long term effect on the balance of payments. These arguments need quantifying. Exchange rate policy should be seen as only one element in a total economic strategy, which must certainly look at real disposable income among other matters.

But the strategy most talked about as an alternative within the Labour Party has been built round substantial import controls, to remove the balance of payments constraint and enable British industry to replace imports with British workers, thus reducing the level of unemployment. There has been a long term secular decline in the competitiveness of British industry. It is there in all the models in one form or another. (So much for Britain's white hot technological revolution.) The underlying task is to improve that industrial performance. Tribunites argue that import controls would offer painlessly the protection needed for infant or ailing industries to establish or revive themselves.

Academic support for this has come from Wynn Godley and Francis Cripps in the Cambridge Economic Policy Group, who have supported import controls and opposed devaluation. They themselves admit that the methodological significance of their model building practices is obscure. There are those (principally monetarists of one kind or another) who have a high regard for Godley's insights, but I know of none among the younger generation outside Cambridge who defend his methodology.

Import controls of the severity Godley's strategy requires would seem to me to be more likely to provoke retaliation than an exchange rate policy which lay within current rules and conventions. Also the competitive effects of the exchange rate provide in practical terms more the sort of encouragement needed than general import controls.

3. **It is not a real strategy.** Table 2 shows only the changes in outcome which the Treasury model suggests would follow from changes in policy. It does not give any indication of actual policies, or actual outcomes. It is true the base forecast is a reasonable projection for the next six years, but the only certain thing about it is that there will be departures and probably large departures from it. Since the uncertainty of forecasts increases with the length of the period forecast, there is a tendency to examine policy only for a short term forecast horizon of 18 months to 2 years, but even in this period there are major uncertainties, and there will certainly be unanticipated changes in policy.

It is however possible consistently to pur-

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sue medium to long term objectives and priorities despite high levels of disturbance and uncertainty in both the short and longer term. The analytical apparatus needed to pursue such consistent policies is not forecasting, but control theory which is one or more levels of analysis deeper and unfortunately more mathematical. It indicates what policy adjustments are needed to pursue consistent objectives as time passes and circumstances change in unexpected ways. It shows how much confidence can be placed in continuing growth, reduced unemployment, and so on, and it makes it possible to shift the uncertainty round from one variable to another with different ways of adjusting policy.

The strategy indicated in Table 2 would at present be implemented by preparing a forecast like the base forecast mainly on the assumption of unchanged policies, adjusted where necessary to produce a feasible outcome. This would indicate continuing high unemployment and a declining pound; the changes indicated in Table 2 would then be added, to produce the alternative strategy. The problem is that as time passes the outturn with the alternative strategy will depart from the forecast requiring greater or lesser or different changes from those indicated in Table 2. Control theory is needed to keep the strategy going steadily, but even now its argument could be simulated well enough while the apparatus needed – which already exists – is installed on the Treasury model.

The pursuit of an effective strategy however requires better education and understanding far beyond the Treasury, which at the technical level is by no means the bogey presented in some Labour Party mythology.

British economics and economists generally fell from the peak of fashion in the sixties after the failure of the economic policies of the Labour government in 1964-70, which deeply marked the attitudes of Labour ministers and particularly Jim Callaghan and Denis Healey. Academic liberal Keynesians did not get down to asking where their ideas and methods went wrong. There were sufficient excuses in their advice having been ignored, for example on devaluation, to prevent any fundamental reappraisal. This would have required catching up with the apparatus of modern economics and econometrics which had become highly mathematical, with inevitably most of the work being American.

The Heath government had no fresh economic insights, and the breakdown of the Bretton Woods system of fixed but adjustable exchange rates in 1971 left confusion in doctrine and practice in the management of national economies and in the international monetary system. While Labour's liberal Keynesian economists could lick their wounds, their apologists, the popular economic correspondents like Sam Brittan and Peter Jay had to find some rationale for their 1500 word columns of wisdom. They could not themselves understand or take part in the highly mathematical debate of modern economics, so were not in a position to interpret it to their readers. Friedmanite monetarism in its guru rather than technical manifestation filled the need. It offered rules of thumb, and high sounding principles, which could deal impressively not only with problems of national ecomonic policy but also with the pressing new international monetary questions all within the required 1500 words.

In the build up to the 1976 crisis in Britain the Prime Minister tried hard to take a sanely human and political view of Britain's difficulties, and to get other national leaders to do so too. There was no monetarist dogma in the help he sought from Chancellor Schmidt and President Ford. But British economists could not give him the technical arguments with which he could counter the obsolete dogmatism of the IMF staff position on conditionality, or the plainly reactionary attitudes of a Republican US Treasury in the dying moments of the Ford presidency.

Callaghan and Healey were forced to take the IMF monetarist medicine whether they believed in it or not. They survived with the economy in better shape than their worst and quite plausible fears. It is not surprising that in the confusion of economic doctrine that still persists, Callaghan and Healey should now be making monetarist noises from time to time. These are summed up in the phrase, 'We have to beat inflation before we can tackle unemployment.' It is not simply trimming to the financial markets. They are genuinely and reasonably convinced of the importance of monetary factors in the economy. But I doubt if they would come up to the standards of evangelical monetarism. The importance they attach as practical politicians to incomes policy, derided by most monetarists, is some evidence of that.

Monetarist doctrine has got rather out of hand: it generates instability, when the point of money is to absorb uncertainty.

In brief, since 1976 monetarist doctrine has got rather out of hand in Britain. The Government sets targets effectively for the sale of gilts. If fund managers in the financial institutions think other fund managers might not be buying enough gilts, they stop buying them in anticipation of a rise in interest rates, thus ensuring the government does not sell enough gilts and forcing up interest rates. The reverse can happen at any time. It generates instability, when the whole point of money is that it should absorb uncertainty and instability. So then somebody suggests that the instability in sales of gilts would be removed if they were auctioned, thus driving all the instability on to interest rates instead of money, causing the maximum of distress to mortgage payers.

As the prime minister goes into the summit, with the European heads of government meeting at Bremen behind him, he will have in mind the options for Britain. He can continue a policy which offers no foreseeable prospect of reducing the level of unemployment with the screws of an increasingly extremist monetary policy being gradually tightened up on him as the markets make increasing nonsense of monetarist doctrine. The Bremen proposals for fixing relative exchange rates in Europe could only lock us in more firmly with our exporters doomed by higher UK inflation rates, with perpetual crisis measures imposed under European supervision. Or the government can break out of all current commitments and directions of policy with widespread import controls. Neither option is attractive.

The alternative strategy I have suggested could be implemented inside or outside the Bremen framework. If we can get the details of Bremen right the advantages in reducing speculative flows would be worth having. There may be better strategies to be found in the more fluent use of the analytical apparatus that is now available. The apparatus is freely available for use in the exploration and negotiation of policies with profound social and political as well as economic consequences. We have far more freedom of economic action than we think if we realize where our freedoms lie and use them properly.

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Tim Albert: Bright lads wanted – ready to learn about boredom

'This unit', said one of the trainers cheerfully, 'is the kind of place where kids get used to the boredom of the world of work.' It was housed in a rather depressing old school building, which made it difficult even on a warm and sunny day to work up much enthusiasm for the place – despite the skills and evident concern of the staff. In one section a small group, mainly boys, would be spending about three months manufacturing and assembling various trolleys, ironically destined for the education service which had so recently defined them as failures. In another section a group, mainly girls, were taking part in a huge game of make-believe, pretending that their classrooms were commercial offices, and that the invoices they received and the problems they were asked to solve concerned real companies, real orders, real people. In a third and sadder section, a group of less able children were assembling tricky little light nuts, packaging them up and sending them off to the local college where, unknown to them, another group would dismantle them.

Of course this may well be better than staying at home feeling rejected, and it is on this premise that the unit is based. It is part of the new Youth Opportunities Programme, designed to defuse the politically and socially explosive problems of youth unemployment. A five-year scheme costing £850 million, it started this April and aims to put some 230,000 through various courses each year.

This particular project is one of a number in Coventry, not so long ago the proud centre of the thrusting industrial Midlands. People used to get worried there when 400 youngsters were out of work at the end of the summer. This autumn they are expecting at least 4,000. Representatives of industry, voluntary organisations and the education service are setting up a number of work experience schemes, community projects, special workshops and courses, like the one described above, to introduce these young people to simple skills and start conditioning them to the world of work. The Youth Opportunities Programme contributes some of the capital and running costs, as well as paying each trainee a weekly allowance of £19.50.

Superficially, the Programme has much to commend it. By the autumn, it should have created some 130,000 places – a considerable organisational achievement, which the somewhat tiresome publicity over teething troubles should not be allowed to obscure. The huge number of school leavers who will be unable to find work cannot be allowed to do nothing without considerable risk to themselves and to society generally. The massive injection of capital for the hitherto neglected group of 16 to 19 year olds must be welcome, and can only be a potential force for good. (Witness the present discussions about grants for sixth formers, which might not be so advanced were it not for the £19.50 allowances paid to those under training programmes.)

There are, however, a number of disturbing features about the Programme, not least the lack of democratic control. It is run by the Manpower Services Commission, for which nine Commissioners are responsible through the chairman Richard O'Brien, a former industrialist. The Commissioners are not elected, but appointed by the Employment Secretary 'after consultation with' the CBI (which produces three members), the TUC (three members), local government (two members) and 'professional education interests' (one member).

That formula is not inevitably bad (indeed, it is argued, it can give much-needed flexibility to an emergent organisation), but in the case of the Youth Opportunities Programme it seems to have taken a dangerous direction. Take the 28 area boards, for example: these were set up to ensure that the Programme would respond to local needs and were a well-publicised part of the original proposals. Geoffrey Holland, a civil servant of high reputation who drafted the proposals, suggested that the areas should be considerably smaller than they have now turned out to be; he also warned that 'the Programme could result simply in opportunities that the older generation think young people need or ought to have'.

With nominations coming from local cabals of the CBI, TUC and education service, it is precisely the older generation, predominantly in the form of successful menopausal males, that constitute these local committees. As for the 28 chairmen, there are three clergymen, no blacks, no women, no young people and certainly no unemployed. The Programme's main defence is that it has set up ad hoc advisory groups to give a voice to such people. The Special Programmes Board of the NSC includes Trevor Phillips, the first black president of the National Union of Students. The Profile Group, which looks at the quality of training, includes a number of vocal critics of the Youth Opportunities Programme. Such structures are supposed to give talented people the chance to influence affairs, but they lack democratic control and may, in fact, serve to blunt their impact by directing their criticisms along internal channels, to be quietly and effectively smothered. Certainly the evidence so far suggests that those running the programmes are far from being in touch with their young clients.

The fact that no woman chairs an area board has already landed the Programme's administrators with a rather frosty relationship with the Equal Opportunities Commission, which complains that both the Programme and the MSC are prejudiced against women. In 1977, for example, though 35 per cent of unemployed 16 to 19 year olds were women, only 24 per cent of the Job Creation opportunities were open to them. Of the women who did complete courses, 91 per cent had been doing clerical and commercial subjects and only 0.2 per cent had done engineering. A recent House of Commons Expenditure Committee commented recently that the MSC were not anti-women; they were just old-fashioned.

Another disturbing feature of the Youth Opportunities Programme is that it seems to be weighed heavily in favour of industrial, as opposed to educational interests. In practice, the education and training components often seem to work out at little more than getting youngsters used to the boredom of work, plus a little remedial attention to literacy and numeracy, and some tips on how to do well in job interviews. Furthermore, over half the programme seems to be made up of 'job experience' schemes, but too often these seem to be little more than subsidised recruitment at the taxpayers' expense. Marks and Spencer, for example, takes only those who have the basic minimum entry qualifications, puts them alongside its own trainees for some months, and then generally offers them a job. CEC in Coventry offered full-time employment to 45 out of the 68 young people on their last work experience scheme; not surprisingly the personnel manager pronounced himself well satisfied. It is, of course, desirable that the young people should get the jobs: but is it really necessary for the government to pay for their initial training in firms which intend to take them on anyway?

The real danger is that, in our rush to soothe the critics from industry and keep unemployed youngsters off the streets, we are obscuring more important long-term issues. How are we going to cope with a future where there *are* fewer jobs to go around? How to create an education service which prepares *all* children for this, instead of creating an obstacle course to decide who has the best job at the end of the day? How to reconcile the needs of industry with the needs of the individual, the world of work with the world of education? The trouble with the Youth Opportunities Programme is that, far from beginning to solve these long-term problems, it drives a wedge between them. We ought to start planning now for a more responsive, less divisive structure for 1983 when the present Programme is due to come to an end.

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Peter Forbes

Can you survive your survival guide?

We 'bums' who travel Europe hunger for better guides and are not fed. The huge market of wayfarers looking for that three-course meal in Bratislava for 16 crowns remains poorly catered for. Try putting yourself in the shoes of some student from, say, Idaho State University who has just arrived in Europe on a sabbatical. In your backpack could be any of the seven Budget Guides to this quaint little continent of ours. One still has the gall to recommend you to make for the Harrods or Liberty July Sales, in order to hunt for fashion bargains, though a little market research could surely suggest that the customers would be more at home in a charity jumble sale or Oxfam shop.

You stagger jet-lagged off Sir Freddie's Skytrain to find that few of your guides bother to indicate the best way into town from Gatwick. Certainly none mention that the airport's Arrival Hall is the easiest place to cadge a speedy lift to London, saving you a quid's railfare for a start. Faced with Victoria Station, presently looking more like the set of a Hollywood movie of the Blitz, its Accommodation Bureau hidden when it is not closed, you will be obliged to dig out one of your guide books.

Perhaps it will be Arthur Frommer's *Europe on $10 a Day* (with recommendations on travel for $15 a day). The author can only have held on to his market because he happened to be the first to hit it. There can be no other reason why this book is still the Gideon Bible of the young and broke on their first-time transatlantic travels. Where to hit the sack? Mr Frommer lists 200 sleeping places in London, at first sight impressive. Closer inspection will reveal that despite his years of experience in the trade Mr Frommer still fails to grasp the vital importance of including a grading system. Just as vexing are his outdated prices. One King's Cross hotelier told me that Mr Frommer's team hadn't checked up on him for four years, yet *Europe on $10 a Day* is still quoting the old prices. Mr Frommer's books must by now have netted him a considerable fortune and my grumbles will no doubt slide off him, like a shiny nylon eiderdown off a sleazy Pimlico bed.

This year the veteran travel firm of Eugene Fodor has brought out its first *Europe on a Budget.* Its 'Rock bottom' budget is $13 a day and its 'Reasonable quality' one is $28 a day – a painful reminder of how short on daily bread is one's own enforced régime. One small consolation is offered UK citizens: Mr Fodor happily downgrades his estimated expenditure for us by 10 per cent, due to our 'greater experience' (of being broke, perhaps?). Mr Fodor does not condescend to emulate Mr Frommer who classifies Hostels in a special 'Sub-starvation' category, but he leaves them out altogether. His handling of hotels is much better, though he fails to adopt a sensible grading system or provide any information on how to reach his hotels by public transport.

Mr Verstappen (he keeps his given name a secret) proudly announces that his brand new *Economy Guide to Europe* took 2½ years' planning and 6 months' research by a team of 37, spending between them an astonishing $100,000. The finished product covers only 20 cities and fails to be more than moderately instructive about any of them. His hotel list is adequate, though it lacks a starring system. For those who are numerate but illiterate, charts make it possible to compare costs and comfort standards. It seems extraordinary, however, that a guide professing to answer the question 'How can I live like the locals and thus save money every day?' should omit any mention of Hostels, of which Europe possesses a marvellous network, used as much by natives as by foreign tourists.

The Harvard Students Agencies' excellent *Let's Go Europe* has the merit of being written by students for students. It is without question the best European Budget guide on the market today, and I do not say that merely because it has already led me to the best campsite in Bucharest and the best souvlaki stall in Salonika. It owes its success in part to spotting that the new vogue in travel is to get as far off the beaten track as possible under one's own steam. Not content to stop at London and Edinburgh it covers the West Country, the Lake District and other such green pastures. A pity the authors did not propose sidetrips to the occasional industrial centre. If you get stuck in Düsseldorf or Manchester you need a guide badly.

Australian Ken Welsh's *Hitch-Hiker's Guide to Europe* gets a second edition this year: a medium class manual to surviving on the most spartan of budgets. It starts with a section on the techniques and philosophy of hitch-hiking. However old hat this may seem to old hands, it contains intermittent illumination and fancifulness. An attitude of prayer, on the knees of course and in full view, is proposed as a surefire Autostop trick. Mr Welsh's views on women hitching on their own are certainly more acceptable than those of other guides which baldly state that it should never be attempted at all (one can imagine their advice on how to avoid pregnancy): 'If you must travel alone just make sure you're on the pill'. But how his traveller ever gets going at all is a mystery, for his guide gives no directions on how to start on a hitch from sprawls like London. Only *Let's Go Europe* makes some effort in this respect, though often a misleading one: those travelling North will be peeved to find out that taking the Tube to Hendon Central and the bus to Watford Way will not leave them at the entrance to the M1 because that is now to be found at the Brent Cross Shopping Centre. Any hope of Mr Welsh scraping through his 'O' levels as a Michelin inspector fade in the light of his positively repellent foible for Fortes', Golden Eggs and Wimpys. His inclusion of Cranks and Ronnie Scott's must be intended for that rare species, the hitch-hiker on an expense account.

'Crammed with invaluable information . . . one can no more imagine the young Antipodean heading North without a copy in his rucksack than someone trying to cross the Sahara without a waterbottle' writes the *New Zealand Herald* of the Australian and New Zealander's Survival Kit, *Down Under in Europe,* by Sue Miles and Peter Bolot. This so called survival kit is no more crammed with information about Europe than *The People's Guide to Mexico.* Half of it deals only with the U.K. and most of that with London. What's left has been divided into brief but boring introductions to other West European Countries. Should the

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trauma of finding oneself in a multi-lingual continent prove too great, a dash to the nearest American Express Office for a whiff of the mother tongue is the sole suggestion for a fix. Trouble communicating with Poms? No need to change mouth wash, try the special chapter on 'Getting on with the Natives'. To impress, just dazzle your fellow boozers with posers like 'Did you know that New Zealand had 600 more sunshine hours a year than the U.K.?' Miles and Bolot think highly of La Terrazza, San Lorenzo, Wheeler's, Simpson's, The Brompton Grill, Fortnum and Mason's and other emporia right up in the Edna Everage class. Some survival kit.

Jonathan Walters' much publicised *Travel on the Cheap* is Penguin's rather disappointing entry in the field. It doesn't attempt either restaurants or hotels, because according to Mr Walters 'such information goes out of date too soon'. This seems a poor excuse coming from someone who includes such ephemeral prices as air and shipping fares, which have incidentally left him standing at the post. *Travel on the Cheap* charts a highly erratic course, zigzagging like a rudderless tanker, spilling ink over Europe, the U.S.A., North Africa Israel and of course the much worshipped golden overland road to the Orient. Mr Walters prefers to rely on his agreeable literary style instead of producing simple or useful charts. The only one he does supply shows comparative ages of legal consent for various sexual practices in twenty nations. His Communist readers will be disturbed to be told that they are still excluded from the U.S. — since the Helsinki agreement, that is naturally no longer the case. Fans of Laker and his stand-by rivals will be puzzled to read that their tickets must be bought six hours in advance rather than the three hours actually required. Mr Walters includes the expensive Motor Rail and Silver Arrow Services, while saying nothing of Normandy Ferries' (P&O) unbeatable student reductions. Penguin have Homerically nodded.

Faced with so much expensive drivel, that Idaho State alumnus of ours might well be tempted to stay at home and, between his University library and local American Express, go after a fast buck turning out a better guide of his own.

Europe on $10 a Day (with recommendations on travel on $15 a day) by Arthur Frommer (Frommer, £3.45).
Fodor's Europe on a Budget (Hodder and Stoughton, £2.95).
Verstappen's Economy Guide to Europe (Pitman £2.95).
Let's Go Europe, Harvard Student Agencies (Dutton, £1.95).
Hitch-Hikers' Guide to Europe by Ken Welsh (Pan 80p).
Down under in Europe (A Survival Kit for Australians and New Zealanders) by Sue Miles and Peter Bolot (Pan 70p).
Travel on the Cheap by Jonathan Walters (Penguin, 90p).

Ian Black

The last days of the peace initiative?

Concern in Jerusalem about the forthcoming London talks between Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Dayan and his Egyptian Counterpart Mohammed Ibraham Karel lies not so much in the fact that it will be impossible to reach agreement with Egypt – the Israeli Cabinet has formally rejected (or, precisely, 'not accepted') last week's Egyptian proposals – as in the likelihood that the US Secretary of State, Cyrus Vance will take the opportunity of unbridgeable gaps to lean heavily on the Israelis. The recent visit to Israel of US Vice-President Walter Mondale was clearly designed as an act of appeasement after the Senate decision in May to supply both Egypt and Saudi Arabia – as well as Israel – with advance F-15 and F5E warplanes.

Aware of the soaring popularity of Sadat in the US the declining influence of the Jewish lobby on Capitol Hill and the appalling effect on public opinion of the blunders perpetrated by the Begin government since the Sadat visit (the new interpretation given to UN resolution 242 and the continued settlement in the West Bank, to name only two) Israel was gratified by the American gesture. Ostensibly ceremonial, the visit took on proportions that went well beyond the boundaries of the friendly reaffirmation of American support that had been expected. The Israeli media gave minute by minute, blow by blow coverage to Mondale's moves, and everyone breathed deeply when a compromise 'private visit' to the wailing wall in the old city of Jerusalem averted a nasty clash about the status of occupied territories.

Mondale's message was wreathed in smiles, but it was forceful too. Washington supports an Israeli withdrawal (after minor border rectifications) from all the territories occupied in 1967; a solution to the Palestinian problem by granting self-determination to the people of the West Bank and Gaza and some kind of political link with Jordan; security arrangements based on demilitarized zones and early warning facilities, a limited Israeli military presence in the areas slated for return, for a limited period: some kind of arrangement for the thorny issue of Jerusalem: peaceful relations between Israel and her neighbours and possibly American guarantees for Israel's security.

There were reassurances too, although they were more apparent than real. Mondale announced that the US was giving the go ahead to Israel to sell its KFIR Jets to Taiwan.

The Vice-President also promised that the US would not withold arms supplies from Israel as a means of political pressure – statement given great prominence in the Israeli press. Although in the light of current Israeli difficulties in securing US approval for its ten year $100 billion arms purchase plan it would be naive to take the guarantee too seriously.

Dreading the prospect of a US-imposed settlement, it is not incomprehensible that Israel is grasping at rather flimsy diplomatic straws. The situation it faces in London next week is not to be envied. In effect it finds itself the more or less helpless victim of Sadat's intelligent exploitation of the deadlock he intentionally created when he recalled his delegation from the short-lived Egyptian Israeli political talks in Jerusalem in January.

Unable to sell his peace initiative to the rest of the Arab world, and faced by serious opposition at home, the Egyptian president needs American intervention. All his moves since that day when the Egyptian delegation's suitcases piled up in the lobby of the Jerusalem Hilton have been calculated to bring Israel to the uncomfortable position it will face in London. Begin's government found itself unable to refuse to send Dayan to meet Kamel. Its formal request – that Egypt submit its own peace plan to counter Begin's 26 point offer – has been met.

The terse six point Egyptian plan – considerably more hardline on several crucial points than draft texts submitted at earlier stages of the negotiations – is plainly designed to encourage the US to present its own compromise proposals. Well-substantiated rumours that Assistant Secretary of State Harold Saunders whose name has almost satanic cannotations for the Israeli Foreign Ministry – was the author of the Egyptian plan, has done nothing to mitigate Israeli fears. In several recent speeches Sadat has urged the Americans to take on the role of active participant instead of passive mediator and come forward with its own proposals at last.

Israeli officials are particularly dismayed by wording of clause two of the Egyptian proposals, which makes to Palestinian people the sole arbiter (horror of horrors) 'in determining their own future' – a significant departure from last January's 'Aswan formula' which had the Palestinians only '*Participating* in the determination of their own future' implying that other parties (guess who) would be participating in that determination.

The possibilities for London, then, are limited, to say the least. The Israeli plan faces the Egyptian plan and they have nothing in common. The Begin government, already under attack from its own supporters for having 'given away' Sinai early on in the euphoria of the peace process, and having gone too far in promising a Ruritanian municipal regime for the 'Arabs of Judea and Samaria,' has nothing else to offer.

But for all the anxious editorializing and pompous moralizing that the coming crisis in Israel-US relations is bound to bring along – along with the predictable accusations that Jewish blood is cheaper than Arab oil, and other such neatly turned phrases – American intervention at this stage seems to be the last chance to save – or just possibly, genuinely to revive – what little remains of the failing peace initiative, which made the Christmas headlines.

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London Diary

☐ Are the Hockney brothers – David, an artist, and Paul, Mayor of Bradford – trying to take over the art world? It was at Mayor Hockney's suggestion that the Bradford Print Biennale, one of Britain's few exhibitions of international standing, was postponed this year in favour of yet another Moore exhibition. True, it is Henry Moore's 80th birthday this month; but there are already four exhibitions of his work in London alone. 'It's not just unfair, it's downright scandalous', said one disaffected printmaker. Expense was one of Bradford's explanations for the cancellation – and yet the Moore show will cost more than the Biennale. Printmakers are also enraged that the next Biennale will have no open section, exhibits being by invitation only. This further reduces the dwindling number of outlets for little-known artists. 'What it really means is that the art world Mafia has succeeded yet again', comments Ellen Kuhn, a printmaker who has exhibited at Bradford. Connoisseurs will be interested to see how fully Hockney and Moore, both of whom have contributed to previous Bradford print shows, are represented in next year's Biennale.

☐ Shareholders in Sotheby's (profits last year £4.9m.) can expect an increase of around 30% in gross income this year. The rise is partly the result of the Hirsch sale which brought in £18.5m, with profits, it has been calculated, of well over £1m. Sotheby's will not confirm this. 'Any figure you may have seen is pure speculation', they commented. 'There were so many expenses with the Hirsch sale – receptions, previews, insurance and so on – we haven't yet worked it out.' Surely a tiny fraction of their profits could have avoided all the fuss over the Warwick Castle Canaletto? 'We are members of the National Arts Collection', came the frosty answer, 'but I couldn't say we actually contributed to the Warwick Castle collection.'

☐ Prince Charles is no theologian. Unfortunate, then, that his opening speech to the Salvation Army's international congress was interpreted in terms of a Catholic/Anglican battle over divorce and the rights of succession. More worthy of debate was his contention that the movement had always evinced a simple and effective social concern, 'unfettered by accepted beliefs'. Two hitherto unpublished letters might modify his historical grasp. During the Twenties, while establishing her birth control clinic (an attempt to reduce the numbers of those the Sally Army might be required to save) Marie Stopes approached General Bramwell Booth and his wife, Florence. Booth sent a straight refusal. Mrs Booth replied in more detail:

> Dear Dr Stopes . . . As a mother of seven children, I feel very strongly that if the members of the medical profession would do more to encourage women to suckle their children, this would greatly increase mother-love and prevent too quick an increase in the family . . . I should greatly deplore anything which induced the poorer people to use the means for the prevention of conception which are now so prevalent among the middle classes . . .

☐ It was headline news that Bernard Braden and his wife had been held up and robbed in their home; but it came as no surprise to Hampstead residents. So burglariously popular is the neighbourhood that people scarcely bother to complain to the police, who occasionally do perfunctory finger-prints and sigh 'There's a lot of it about'. I once enjoyed a week of criminality verging on the poetic. Coming out early from a boring harpsichord concert at Fenton House, I found that the car had been stolen. Back at home, the house had been burgled. Next day, I came back from lunch to discover that someone had thrown a brick through the french windows but, foiled by Banham's Patent Locks, had wandered disconsolately away, only to discover that the front door was wide open. I met him as he was coming out, with a tea-towel over his face. 'Good afternoon', he said politely. 'Good afternoon. WHAT!' I replied. Alerted, the police drove me all over Hampstead, looking for a tall man wearing a tea-towel. We even went to the rogues' gallery at Scotland Yard, where they had 14 pictures of men who specialised in shaving before thieving. They all looked the same – half-shaved. So I gave up, and stopped having valuable goods.

☐ Edward Heath's threatened return to active politics once more raises a question which has long puzzled our readers. Is he a human being? Last week when I spoke to him he was blandly blank about both dung-throwing in the House of Commons and his alleged *rapprochement* with Mrs Thatcher. It was only when we got on to music – the occasion was a press conference about one of his pet projects, the European Community Youth Orchestra – that he dwindled into common liveliness. 'Nonsense', he said, 'Berlin is not sharper than London.' He was refrerring not to economic acumen, but to the continuing debate among musicians about EEC differences over pitch.

Members of the youth orchestra like his conducting style – he occasionally takes over from their usual conductor, Claudio Abbado, whom they find quieter and less positive. In return, Mr Heath appreciates their little jokes. Earlier this year, on their first tour, someone switched the first and second violin parts on the music-stands. 'Abbado didn't know what was going on', Mr Heath said, chuckling massively, 'but I did. It was great fun.'

The orchestra still has some international problems, if not quite as severe as the EEC's over agricultural prices. French french-horns have too much vibrato for British taste, Italian oboes are too thin and reedy – 'but we'll sort all that out', Mr Heath confidently predicted. If they can make music into an election issue, he might be able to give Callaghan some problems.

☐ Victor Korchnoi, the defecting Soviet grandmaster, may be justified in fearing reprisals should he defeat Anatoly Karpov in the world chess championship beginning next Monday. 'If Karpov beats me, I am safe and sound', he said last week, 'but if I crush him my life is in danger.'

At an international level, there are many precedents for the violence that Korchnoi fears. During a ceremonial visit to France, one of William the Conqueror's sons played chess with Louis, son of the reigning French monarch. Henry, incensed by Louis' superior play, threw the chessboard at him: war ensued. In the late sixteenth century the Italian, Giovanni da Cutri, unexpectedly defeated the renowned Ruy Lopez at the Royal Court in Madrid. He was definitively poisoned shortly afterwards.

The forthcoming contest, the first world final for six years, is unusually fraught. Karpov is Orthodox, as it were, and has publicly denounced Korchoi's defection; his challenger now has not even a Swiss flag on his name. 'At least Spassky and Fischer used to tease each other,' comments Nicholas Bethell, Russian expert and friend of Spassky. 'This time, it won't be possible. All the psychological tricks will be used – turning up late, claiming ill-health, accusing each other of psyching and spooking, "stonewalling" for an adjournment to gain time for analysis with seconds.' Chess devotees long for the days of 'alcoholic chess' where, instead of pieces, bottles of strong drink were used, those who captured a 'piece' being obliged to drink its contents. Lasker was reputed to have won such a game by an apparently stupid early sacrifice of his queen (containing half a litre of cognac). His opponent did not even survive the middle-game.

☐ Judge Geoffrey Baker, QC, did well to acquit three night nurses accused of stealing razor blades, disinfectant and towels from their York hospital. 'Perhaps', he said kindly, 'the only thing you did wrong was to hang on to them a little too long.' One of my doctor friends has gone much further. He has stocked his kitchen with surgical cheatles (a pair of tongs used for lifting out sterilised instruments – he finds them useful for turning over steaks); a full set of Mayo knives for fine carving; forceps for lifting out spaghetti; and an electric drill, previously used on skulls in the post-mortem department, for tough chickens.

Ruth Hall

This England

Prizes: £3 book token for first entry, £2 tokens for others printed. Paste entries on a postcard.

☐ P.C. Wren added: 'At the end of her dances she was helped off the stage by a man. He bought her a lemonade. I saw her grab his genitals. From this I came to the conclusion that they knew one another.' – *News of the World* (Ben Pomerance)

☐ Thirty demonstrators from the Animal Liberation Front staged a sit-in at a battery hen unit at Daventry, Northants, run by nuns of the Order of the Congregation of the Passion of Jesus. They were evicted by police and later the Mother Superior said 'Our 10,000 chickens are quite happy. They sit in their cages and sing all day long'. – *Guardian* (D. H. Cudmore)

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First Person

Arthur Marshall

Sing as you go

I don't seem to have any luck, in print, with the word 'public'. It sometimes drops a letter and confuses itself with something else, and vice versa. Writing recently in another journal about Siamese twins, I made mention of the, to me, fascinating fact that their pubic hair exactly matched, each lot dividing itself up into precisely similar sections of grey and black. When the first newspaper proof reached me, 'pubic hair' had become 'public hair' which, in a sense and as the twins so constantly exhibited themselves for cash, was no more than the truth, though I doubt whether in the nineteenth century such intimate portions ever saw the light of day except at the post mortem and bath time. A comparable sort of printing misfortune befell me some years ago. I was a master at Oundle and had begun, in my spare time, to broadcast, appearing in so-called comedy half hours and doing imitations of schoolmistresses (well, one must start somewhere). This was considered by various papers to be a newsworthy item and got itself written about here and there. One of the articles ended its informative chat with 'Arthur Marshall is, of course, a master at a pubic school'. It was the 'of course' that I found somewhat disturbing.

Soon after the war, I gave, in written form and in a monthly magazine, helpful advice to some public (and I know I can count on our staunch printers to retain here the 'l') figures on the world's operatic stages. The plight of most of the principal characters in grand opera is a heart-rending one. They lead tortured lives in which having to belt out the topmost notes is the very least of their worries. Picture, for example, Cho-Cho-San of Nagasaki, landed with a baby, deserted by her sailor friend and with her butterfly wings sadly bedraggled (I suggested that she go straight to the American consul, fill in a form and sue for maintenance). Then in *Lohengrin* there was Elsa of Antwerp whose lover came by Swan (another girl, Senta, had a flying Dutch admirer who came by Phantom Ship) and I urged her to think twice before finally settling in Holland, reminding her that to do so one would have to be quite unusually fond of windmills, patched trousers, cheese, clogs, bulbs and the more watery kind of dike.

None of them wrote to thank me for help given but, undeterred by what I prefer to think of as thoughtlessness rather than deliberate ingratitude, I am pressing on and, as before, I shall adopt the wholesome tone and style and the bracing approach of those who weekly dish out such excellent advice to worried readers in ladies' magazines.

'Carmen' (Seville). Frankly, dear, it is your profession that makes me anxious (I am of course referring to the one that you pursue in the cigarette factory and not to your attractive little side-line). The world of the fragrant weed is currently such a chancy one and, in this country at least which is always so ready to give a lead, every cigarette packet now carries a government health warning and this is a practice which, though so backward in many ways, Spain may soon follow and then where will you be? Saddled with carton after carton of 'fags' and nobody puffing at them. After the splendidly firm years of General Franco's regime, Spanish government warnings are likely to be taken rather more seriously than those in our own right little tight little island. Have you, sweet child, been able to save up any of your pennies? If so, why not, with your pretty singing voice, splash out on a few mandolin lessons and give recitals? At all events, eschew both your gypsy companions and your soldier chum (and, while you are at it, there are quite a few other things for you to eschew at the same time). Oh dear, you are in a pickle, are you not?

'Violetta' (Paris). Yours is basically an Italian name dear, isn't it, and here I must let you into a little secret. I have had by me for quite some time now a volume called 'The Victrola Book of the Opera'. It was printed in 1921 and for Americans by the Victor Talking Machine Company (hence the Victrola gramophone) and in order to encourage them to buy expensive records of the different operas, the plots were all attractively set out, together with snaps of Caruso (rather tubby) and Patti and so on. And as some Americans, through no fault of their own, have less culture than others, the foreign names were divided up into recognisable English syllables so that everybody can get the pronounciation more or less right and we all know where we are. You, dear, appear as Vee-oh-let-tah and your servant as Joo-zep-peh, while your gentleman friend (the one who wants to marry you, I mean) comes out as Ahl-fray-do.

The opera in which you appear is of course Lah Trah-vee-ah-tah, by clever Signor Verdi and hence all these difficult Italian names round which we have now so splendidly got our tongues. There is, however, something much more difficult than names to get round. As far as I have been able to piece it together from the dictionary, 'La Traviata' means 'the lady who has been led astray' and therefore somebody to whom our hearts, in her shame and desperate anguish, should go out in deepest sympathy. *But,* Violetta dear, when the curtain rises on your evening party in those costly rooms, shame and anguish are the last things that one associates with you as, smothered in jewels and with a daring *décolletage,* you go waltzing about, champagne glass in hand and singing a number listed in the Victrola recordings as 'A Bumper We'll Drain'. There seem, too, to be rather a lot of men present and I've taken to wondering who paid for all that supper (I'm sure I spotted lobsters). The verb 'to lead', whether connected with astray or not, is meaningless unless there is some person, or persons, following. Are you absolutely sure who did the leading? Be quite frank with me, dear. Drop me a little line and hold nothing back. No life founded on a falsity is going to come to anything. And meanwhile, do watch that cough.

'Amina' (Switzerland). Though your betrothed, Elvino (say it Ell-vee-no, just like they do in Fleet Street), was understandably upset when you were discovered after lights out not only in Count Rodolfo's bedroom but also in the Count's bed, even though he had rapidly exited through the window, I fully accept your explanation, dear, that you were walking in your sleep. The opera is, after all, Bellini's *La Sonnambula,* a title which explains all. You were obviously thoroughly over-excited after the engagement party and Elvino's gift of that lovely ring and all the villagers singing 'Long live Amina: Tra-la-la-la-la!' and it had probably all played on your mind.

There is, however, possibly another explanation. Do watch your diet. Cast your mind back, Amina, and tell me what you ate at the party. You live, I see, in that part of Switzerland which borders Italy and you therefore can't be a million miles from Gorgonzola. Did you perhaps have a tasty cheese snack last thing? Fatal, if you did, and I've often thought that that may have been part of Lady Macbeth's trouble. In future, just settle for a tumbler of warm milk laced with Slumberola. Sweet dreams, dear.

Roger Woddis

He who cannot

> A forthcoming government survey on primary schools shows that some children are being held back because of their teachers' lack of knowledge.

Beside yon broken fence that skirts the way,
Bearing the sign, 'Travolta Rules OK',
There, in his noisy classroom, poor
dumb fool,
The village idiot tries to teach his school:
A simple man, and honest through
and through,
But thick is he, nor does he have a clue.
Well have his huddled pupils learned to trace
The muddled boredom in his yawning face;
Full well they laugh with overacted glee
At all his jokes, at least the ones they see.

From him his luckless charges learn to spell;
'Tis certain he can write, though not
too well;
Pints he can measure, which is paramount,
And even the story runs that he can count.
In science and history, geography and art,
He stands, or stumbles, in a class apart;
While certain words that have a
vulgar sound
Amaze the gawping children sitting round;
And still they gawp, and still the
wonder grows
That one poor sod should teach them all
he knows.

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Letters to the Editor

Wilson and Oldfield and MI5

Sir, In your profile of Sir Maurice Oldfield of the Secret Intelligence Service (NS 7 July) you write that 'The Pencourt account of him (Sir Maurice) being called in by a paranoid Harold Wilson to discuss right-wing cells in MI5 appears to be largely fictional.' Lest any NEW STATESMAN readers concluded that we misquoted the former Prime Minister, when he spoke to us at length about his grave doubts about the British Secret Service, we would like to draw on the transcripts of our many conversations with him. Thanks to our former employer, the BBC, we were asked to tape-record interviews and we can therefore show that the account we give in our book *The Pencourt File* is both accurate and in context.

One interview on tape, like so many with the former Prime Minister, was in the context of the Norman Scott 'shot dog' mystery. It underlines how deep Sir Harold's mistrust of MI5 had become by 1976. Impressing upon us his strong belief that South Africa and a dissident right-wing group inside British Intelligence were together responsible for the Thorpe-Scott affair he went on to say that MI5 had also tried to discredit him and the Labour Government. His exact words and our responses included:

HW: 'They were saying I was tied up with the communists. And MI5 knew. The arch link was Marcia (Lady Falkender) – a dedicated communist! . . . So I sent for Oldfield.'
BP: 'Maurice Oldfield?'
HW: 'Yes. He said there is a section of MI5 . . . and very right wing . . . They would naturally be brought up to believe that socialist leaders were another form of communist.'

Armed with this and other disturbing 'confirmation' from Sir Maurice Oldfield, then head of MI6, the former Prime Minister then sent for Sir Michael Hanley, then head of MI5, to demand an explanation. That such meetings took place were independently confirmed to the *Observer* by Sir Harold and a well-known civil servant with close knowledge of the matter. We attempted to talk to Sir Maurice and Sir Michael about the then Labour Prime Minister's criticisms of their Service, but they were not prepared to talk: no doubt a habit secret servicemen not unnaturally find comes second nature. However, we feel the NEW STATESMAN might do better than just call Harold Wilson 'paranoid' as you do in your article. Perhaps you might better explore why so many prominent Labour politicians share their former leader's suspicions.

BARRIE PENROSE
ROGER COURTIOUR

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Sanderstead, Surrey

Sir, It is a mystery to me why the NS devoted two full pages to producing a boring and empty profile of Sir Maurice Oldfield. The six columns read like tired club gossip, with no insight into why one might enter such a profession, other than a journalistic attribution as to what he *would* say if asked, drawing from *The Honourable Schoolboy* to support the supposition. Hardly sound writing.

It is odd that the writer of the profile did not analyse, with critical acuity, a form of law and government which, as a democracy, nevertheless is as ruthless in its persecution of critics of official secret agencies, as it is as benevolent in protecting members of secret agencies from both legal or governmental inspection or prosecution. It is probably to the honourable good fortune of the MI branch that it is honourably poor and impecunious, and thus may maintain a code of honour which its CIA brethren can and do not.

J. M. B. CRAWFORD

59 Harley Street
London W1

Is there blood on the oil?

Sir, I judge the first part of Bailey and Rivers' revelations on Rhodesian oil sanctions busting (NS 30 June) as being about par for the course for investigative journalism. Doubtless all the murky truth will out and your commendable predisposition towards this type of reporting, Mr Editor, will have been satisfied. However you shrewdly realised that not a few of your readers have probably had a sneaking suspicion for some time that certain British companies have been culpable for supplying Smith with oil, and in order to stifle yawns you appear to have succumbed to the hoary old trick of shock tactic. And what more hell sent than a recent bumper massacre on the Vumba to attach to it; and, to cap it, a photograph on the front page of one of the wretched souls who perished there, together with the title: Blood and Oil in Africa.

The opening sentence of the piece – and this sentence alone – alludes to the blood, trying to connect itself to a story otherwise totally concerned with sanctions busting. In the light of the serious, though internationally unsupported, efforts of the internal settlement sponsors, isn't this a rather smelly and low level to sink the paper you've lately taken over? I for one consider that you have a responsibility to show in much greater detail how the sort of atrocities that recently occurred on the Vumba and at Mayo are a direct and justifiable consequence of Rhodesia's UDI.

PETER J. S. FFORDE

74 Blenheim Crescent
London W11

The miners' future

Sir, It is a pity you did not carry your argument a stage further in 'What future for the miners?' (NS 7 July). True, the next 15 years could be difficult for coal. But that is only as long as it would take to develop the modern deep-mined pits and conversion technologies that are needed if we are to have a coal industry capable of producing, say, 150m. tons a year in 20 years time. The real questions concern the phasing of the new investment in coal mining and conversion technologies and how to avoid pit closures stemming from the temporary windfall of North Sea oil and gas.

Controlled depletion of oil and gas is necessary to avoid the hardship that would arise from a rapid return to heavy dependence on high-cost oil imports – especially if economists are right in expecting the price of oil *in real terms* to double or treble during the next 20 years. This means that we must keep enough offshore oil and gas in reserve to be able to meet our essential requirements for these premium fuels until satisfactory substitutes are reasonably assured – perhaps well into the next century. The resources are finite and there will be no flexibility when the peak rate of production is reached. The decision must therefore be made soon.

Many people who see the need for controlled depletion, nevertheless think it is impracticable owing to the commercial and political pressures to maximise production in the short term. The Energy Commission has yet to inspire confidence in this respect. It is just possible, however, that the miners will recognise that their interests will be served, not by exaggerated wage claims (which would make large redundancies inevitable), but by providing countervailing political pressure so that controlled depletion may yet be seen as a practical proposition – a case of enlightened self-interest working in the wider national interest.

JOHN SURREY

Science Policy Research Unit
University of Sussex

The myths of Camra

Sir, While I appreciate the validity of some of the points raised in Christopher Hird's article (NS 23 June) he overstates his case by a series of generalisations, presumably in his eagerness to accept Mr Protz's rather jaundiced views as gospel and to condemn anyone prepared to admit to seeking a profit. For example, he manages to sidestep the primary advantage of kegged over traditionally dispensed beer, it being that the principal characteristic required by the public in a brand of beer is consistency, in clarity and carbonation as well as in flavour. No matter how well the brewers train the licensed trade, this can only be ensured by the control on the product afforded by stabilisation.

Perhaps it is also opportune to bury this myth so beloved by CAMRA that pasteurisation kills the beer. In fact, of course, what it does is to aid the removal of yeast, which has accomplished its primary role, and contaminating bacteria which would lead to spoilage of the beer. If Mr Hird considers that only their inclusion makes for live beer, then I will happily quaff ale from crematorial urns. Nor does pasteurisation in itself significantly alter the beer flavour, as evidenced by the readiness of even the traditional breweries also to stabilise their product for some outlets and for the 'carry-out' trade. Or perhaps CAMRA sees itself as a sort of Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Bugs.

WILLIAM CALVERT

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Edinburgh

Second service

Sir, Arthur Marshall asks why there is a second service in tennis (NS 30 June). The answer is that originally the service was of no importance. As the word indicates, the ball was put into play by an underling, not by one of the players. In *le jeu de paume* (real tennis), the forerunner of lawn tennis, it is the return of service which is known as *le premier coup.* It must be at least ten years since I wrote a piece in the NEW STATESMAN advocating abolition of the second service. But failure has become increasingly popular since then, so Arthur Marshall had better keep quiet or those who can't get the ball over the net with two shots will be allowed a third.

JEREMY POTTER

41 Woodsford Square
London W14

Apology

Sir, Last week at the NEW STATESMAN's printers I needed to lengthen a line in Gitta Sereny's article. I did so by adding the words 'the Nazi Admiral', as an explanatory (as I thought) prefix to Canaris. I recognise that this was an extremely crude and simplistic phrase to use about such an ambiguous and disputed figure, and I apologise for attributing to Gitta Sereny a view she does not hold.

CHRISTOPHER HITCHENS

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

V. S. Pritchett

He is Elsewhere

The Gulag Archipelago III by ALEXANDER SOLZHENITSYN translated by H. T. Willetts *Collins/Harvill* £6.50

The third volume of *The Gulag Archipelago* brings to an end an extraordinary work which is bound to have a lasting place in Russian literature, for it evokes the voices and experience of millions of Russians who were washed down the sewers of Stalinist communism. The book as a whole is a tumbling pile of raw material forked over and made coherent by Solzhenitsyn's sustained contempt for the stale and blundering mind of the communist bureaucracy. His ex-wife has absurdly complained that his attitude is unscientific and that he has collected the hearsay and myths of the prison mind. But those myths are the inevitable product of communist doctrine, its silences, sophistries and evasive casuistries.

If Solzhenitsyn can be accused of arrogance, his imagination brings the passion and scorn of the poet-preacher-prophet to a people who fear to look at their immediate past: he is very much in the powerful Russian tradition of Tolstoy and Dostoevsky, even more of Belinsky and Herzen. The danger, of course, is that so much raw material will sink under its own tonnage and the incessant quality of the preacher's voice by the time we open the third volume. This has not happened. In the new volume his anger has reached a kind of serenity, and it is by far the most vigorous and coherent of the three: he is restoring to the victims what sustained them in their individual lives as human beings – the stoic human faculty of being 'elsewhere'. The Party cannot kill the 'elsewhere'.

There is the example of the prisoner who stands by the trench he is digging, leaning on his spade, pausing before he returns with his fellows on the way back to the camp. He is a naïve deserter from the Army, an innocent Tolstoyan who believed that war was wicked. He slipped out to Afghanistan – a foolish thing to do – and was sent back. Now he stands in the snow getting as white as a statue, a ghost; perhaps even a portent.

> Doesn't he care? Does he even like it? He stares through the flurry of snow flakes – at the camp, at the white steppe. He has broad bones, broad shoulders, a broad face with a growth of stiff yellow bristles. He is always deliberately slow-moving, very calm. He remains standing there – looking at the world and thinking. He is elsewhere.

And at once the fundamental Solzhenitsyn question arises: was the man brought into the world by the State? Why then had the State usurped the right to decide how this man should live?

> We don't mind having a fellow countryman called Lev Tolstoy. It's a good trademark. (Even makes a good postage stamp.) Foreigners can be taken on trips to Yasnaya Polyana. We are always ready to drool over the opposition to Tsarism and his excommunication (the announcer's voice will tremble at this point). But my dear countrymen, if someone takes Tolstoy seriously, if a real-life Tolstoyan springs up among us – hey, look out there! Mind you don't fall under our caterpillar tracks.

Solzhenitsyn is plain and searing in a Swiftian way and outfaces the political jargon and clichés of official prose by an active syntax and by what the official mind cannot bear, the ridicule and ease of the vernacular – i.e. the natural voice of the people. As a preacher he is a good actor, varying his styles by throwing in a proverb or two ('The quickest louse is the first on the nit comb') or by the sly afterthought. On the state of returned prisoners in 1949:

> All this 32 years after the October Revolution, four years after the war, three years after the Nuremberg trials when mankind at large had learned about the horrors of Nazi camps and said with a sigh of relief: It can never happen again.

In the two earlier Gulag volumes one was depressed by the resignation of the victims; although we granted their situation was hopeless, we could not help murmuring about the traditional passivity of the Russian peasant. Were there no serious revolts or attempts at escape? What about the sudden transition from sour subservience to violent energy and anger which had been noted in the Russian temper? This third volume is remarkable for its account of such outbursts of ingenuity and fury. There are strikes and hunger strikes and escapes of great courage, and, although they fail, they provide something more than excitement to the narrative; they light up the people and landscape outside the camp. An inhabited Russia appears.

The mutinies have been cut out of the records and will come to seem like myths; but myths are part of a people's spiritual equipment and in Russia feed the profound love of the Russian for his race and his soil. There was the Retyunin affair in 1942 when the prisoners disarmed the guards of a convoy and became partisans. There was a rising of railway workers which became a sustaining whisper in the camps. There were ruined revolutionary officers, some of whom had fought against each other, who still felt the élan of the fighting soldier and his training. The breakouts were hopeless: the zeks felt safer in gaol; but, says Solzhenitsyn, 'would you say dying by inches was more "hopeful"?' Anyway, stool pigeons and informers proliferated. There was a period in which stoolies were murdered. There was the hunger strike at Ekibastuz in the Fifties when the system of Special Camps began to crack. The author goes into the revolt and the 40 days of defiance at Zengir in great detail. The camps were, and still are, an underground or counter-society with their own unwritten laws, hierarchies, customs, ruled of course by guards, warders who, up to the Fifties, relied upon the natural hatred of the politicals for the thieves in order to divide and rule.

One would have to be as devious as a prisoner to follow the nuances of intention and psychology in this grey social labyrinth, and Solzhenitsyn is an exhaustive analyst of them. At Zengir the authorities made the blunder of moving a few hundred thieves into a camp which had a far greater number of politicals, and the politicals told the thieves that knife for knife they had the upper hand: wisely the thieves made common cause. In the carefully planned revolt the controllers of this camp could do nothing. Troops were called in but the revolt lasted from mid-May until the end of June: and then the tanks were brought in. Seven hundred men and women were killed or wounded. For six weeks they had lived. Three years later, after the camp was closed, local people found the mass graves and put flowers on them. In 1962 at the town of Novocherkassk, piece rates were lowered at the Electric Locomotive works and food was short: the whole town rebelled; slogans saying 'Khrushchev for sausage meat' appeared on the walls. The Party officials fled to Rostov, and once more the tanks came and children climbed on them to blind the sights. Soldiers fired on the ground. The families of the killed or wounded were deported to Siberia. Reform?

The most extraordinary portrait in the book is that of Georgi Tenno, the committed escaper. He introduces a really startling sense of the man born irrepressibly free. His 'elsewhere' was not a nostalgia: it was an energy. He had started early in life, escaping from an orphanage, becoming a seaman, learning foreign languages, sailing to Iceland and England as a liaison officer with British convoys, becoming a circus turn as a memory man. After the war he decided to leave for Estonia and was caught. A long career of escape from prison followed and eventually he got a 25-year stretch. He turned escaping into an exact science, perfecting himself after every failure. From Ekibastuz he *did* get out: for a long time he and his companion were free. The episode is told in Tenno's words. The two cut the wire, crawl out on the steppe, hide in holes from the search-light and flares (for the escapes were known at once). The two guessed their way to Irtysh, revelling in the freedom of 'the green prosecutor' – the prison name for escape. After three days they are weak for lack of water. They try to catch a sheep; they hope to drink its blood. They wake up thinking that horses have turned into soldiers. They find a railway track and walk on the rails – steel will kill the scent for the police dogs.

The journey has an astonishing mixture of fear and farce. Their luck improves. On the sixth day they terrorise a Kazakh family and carry off a sack of food. They eventually steal a boat, pretending to be sportsmen who have bought food at a State Farm. There is a fight at a ferry-keeper's hut and they have to get out quickly. There are lazy days in the long grass but, as they resume the river journey, there is a crisis: another boat is following a parallel course. Possibly it is being rowed by MVD men. Tenno has a brilliant idea: to pretend that he and his fellow are MVD men. They close in on the boat and find only a peasant and his wife who are moving their chattels for good.

> I did a bit of quick thinking. A meeting like this, on our last night on the river! If he's pulling up his roots they must be carrying provisions, money and passports.

Rob them of their money, passports and clothes. Tie the couple up! That is not enough.

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The couple would be certain to report them. Obviously the only solution is to kill them. Kolya, the slapdash smart-alec, is ready, but Tenno cannot bring himself to do that. The free want the free to live. And (remember he is telling the story and he is a circus type and actor) he is either a sentimentalist or superstitious: a white kitten jumps out of the boat – 'with its tail stiff as a stalk in the air' – purrs and rubs itself against his leg. This unmans him. All will and ruthlessness earlier on, packed tight with the cunning all his years in prison have given him, he suddenly has no will. He relents. So the couple are not killed or robbed and the escapers go off. The strange thing is that this episode *did* break their tenacity and confidence: they started pulling different ways, making mistakes and bickering. They are caught in the end. In 1967, when he was still in prison, when cancer got him, he was on his sick bed vowing vengeance and out for murder: Molotov first, and then one or two notorious prosecutors; Tenno has been 're-educated' – but as a primitive. The story of his escape is beautifully done: there are moments, in the river scenes, which recall *Huckleberry Finn*; Tenno has the qualities of a genuine folk hero.

Stalin was as foolish as the Soviet Union still is, in jailing turbulent priests like Solzhenitsyn: they are as indestructible as persecuted sects, such as the Russian Baptists who fear sin more than they fear the State – even the Sunday-school children stand up to the prosecutor. It was foolish to think that the Dialectic could destroy the sense of mercy and justice and the inner life. The Labour Camps did not re-educate Solzhenitsyn in the fashion the System imagined: they created a Believer and put the iron in his soul.

James Fenton

Catastrophe Theory

Decent Interval by FRANK SNEPP *Random House* £8.95

The eye-witness is often at a disadvantage in describing an historical event. An overwhelming impression from the senses, or a particularly forceful personal experience, may destroy his perspective entirely, and render him untrustworthy as an authority. The eye-witness, in the heat of the moment, forgets his own ignorance. When I think of the important mistakes I made in writing about Indochina, I am overwhelmed with a shame and guilt that the years seem unable to dispel. When I think of the incidental detail that I missed, I consequently do not care so much.

It never occurred to me, for instance, that the group of panic-stricken Korean diplomats who woke me up in Saigon on the morning of 30 April 1975, shouting that the Americans had called off the evacuation, included Brigadier General Rhee Dai Yong, the former deputy commander of Korean forces in Vietnam and once deputy head of the Korean CIA. It was a startling oversight on the part of the Americans (the man is apparently still in jail in Vietnam), but I was only just beginning to see how many startling oversights there had been. It never occurred to me, as I wandered over to the Embassy a few minutes later, that the last Marines were still on the roof. I entered the building with the crowd, and was astonished at the number of incriminating documents lying around – for instance, I saw letters of application from Vietnamese seeking employment by the Embassy. But it never occurred to me that the Americans would have left behind enough information about their most sensitive intelligence operations for the whole remaining outfit to be blown sky-high. Instead, what forced itself on my mind, as I went from room to room, was the positioning of the armchairs, the fullness of the ashtrays, the vivid impression of offices only recently abandoned. How recently I did not realise, until, on leaving the building, I found myself running through tear-gas. That was the last thing the Americans dropped on Vietnam. I knew that the evacuation had been slow and chaotic, but I never realised until reading this book just how mismanaged it had been, and why.

A certain ignorance can sometimes be useful. To anyone not privy to the secrets of the Americans it was obvious for months that the North Vietnamese were going to take Saigon by force. You only had to look at the shrinking map of the South to see what was happening, and you did not need to be a State Department analyst, or a CIA station chief, or Dr Henry Kissinger, to know that the glory of total victory, at such speed and such little cost, would be preferable to a further round of settlements. On the other hand, if you *were* Kissinger, or Tom Polgar (the CIA Station Chief in Saigon), or Graham Martin (the US Ambassador) or any one of a vast number of experts, you apparently did not realise these simple truths. You thought, *up to two days before the end,* that something might be salvaged, that a compromise might be reached.

Frank Snepp, as a CIA analyst, realised what was going on, but he could not convince his superiors. In his account he shows in detail how Polgar and Martin were deceived partly by their own commitment to the cause, and partly by the efforts of the French, Russians and Hungarians to convince them that a settlement was possible. He misses out, perhaps, on the general American blindness to the feasibility of a Vietnam without the Americans – a striking phenomenon of the time. European newspapers, for instance, let their correspondents choose whether to stay on or not. American newspapers, which had encouraged their men to expose themselves to the most fearful dangers over the years, ordered their staff out. Europeans, in considering the dangers that lay ahead, looked at the South Vietnamese troops as the main problem – once the North had taken over, they reckoned they would be safe. The vast majority of Americans were culturally incapable of making this calculation. It was not a question of bravery – it was a question of imagination. An American could imagine only too well

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(perhaps better than we could) the revenge of the defeated army against anyone with a white face; what he could not imagine was sitting in a café with the Vietcong at the next table.

In the same way, Kissinger, Martin and Polgar could not imagine outright defeat. They were always several steps behind both Vietnamese sides. Both sides. One of the many virtues of this book is the way it shows how the Americans were not running Thieu and his government, and were not kept informed of what was going on. It was the greatest fallacy of the Left to describe Thieu as a puppet. If only (from the American point of view) he had been! But the point about the right-wing nationalist governments in Asia was that, the more they relied on American money and military support, the more their self-respect forced them into preserving a kind of independence based on corruption and deceit.

The great work on this subject is Barbara Tuchman's *Stilwell and the American Experience in China*. It was impossible for Stilwell to make Chiang Kai-shek see what was good for him. The Americans wanted to take Chinese soldiers to India, train them there and send them into Burma to fight the Japanese. But this would have created an independent force beyond the Nationalists' control. They were obliged to provide troops, so they sent their worst troops, and at the last moment someone had the bright idea – since these men would be re-equipped, what the hell – of removing their uniforms. In the ensuing plane journey over the Hump, many of the men froze to death. The remainder were useless on arrival.

Any American involved in propping up Lon Nol or Thieu could see, in Tuchman's book, the paradigm for what went wrong in Indochina. Lon Nol and Thieu did not fall because they were puppets – they fell because, not being puppets, they thwarted their supporter. In order to be independent, they must have money. In order to get money, they must be corrupt – so their generals sold arms to the enemy, stole the soldiers' pay, poisoned their men with profitable drugs, lived on extortion and illegal taxes. The wealth thus accumulated, the Left supposed, was designed for expatriation – and certainly a lot of it left Vietnam and Cambodia with the corrupt. But in Cambodia at least several notorious officers stayed on after the defeat, to face certain death. This suggests that independence in the South of France had not been their aim. What they wanted was independence *in their own country*. Corruption was the right-wing version of the war of independence against the Americans.

It is not surprising, then, that when the US tried to find out at the beginning of 1975 just how much equipment the South Vietnamese needed to survive, there was no way of telling. The argument about the level of military aid was bogus from start to finish – from the start because the State Department figures had to be cooked, and in the end because after the fiasco of the withdrawal from the Central Highlands and Hue, what Thieu lacked was not money or arms, but men. Nor is it so surprising in retrospect that Thieu did not tell the Americans of his new strategy (called 'Light on the top, heavy on the bottom') of giving up large areas in order to consolidate what he felt he could hold on to. What is surprising is the complete inflexibility of mind on the part of Ambassador Martin and Station Chief Polgar in the face of catastrophe after catastrophe.

Polgar was convinced that a deal could be reached, and that the great betrayal by the Americans had been failure to deliver arms. Martin seemed to see any preparations for the evacuation as a way of precipitating the downfall of the regime by creating panic. Instead he concentrated on spreading panic by broadcasting lies about what was going on in the areas taken over by the North, and by such devices as the Babylift, which were supposed to be good publicity for the armaments cause. When the extra aid did not materialise, the very emphasis that Polgar and Martin had given it turned out to be deleterious to morale.

Meanwhile, Americans who wanted to save the lives of Vietnamese who had worked for them were obliged to go behind the backs of those in charge. And when it came to the wholesale evacuation, the Americans could hardly distinguish between those who were in danger from the North Vietnamese and those who were not. There were rumours that unmarried girls would be paired off with legless NVA veterans, that women would have their painted fingernails torn out, that anyone who had had the slightest connection with the Americans would be killed. These rumours were untrue, but, since they had been fostered by the Americans, the Americans could hardly suddenly deny them. The bar-girls left for the Philippines. However, because of Martin's insistence that men of military age should not be allowed to leave in the earlier, fixed-wing evacuation, vast numbers of people who were in real danger got stranded. I don't think the most starry-eyed leftist would have advised those involved in the Phoenix programme to hang around. As for the former deputy head of the Korean CIA, he got stuck because by the final stages Washington no longer believed what Martin was telling them. There was a strong theory that the Ambassador had gone slightly mad.

This book is full of interesting material, but I wonder whether the English reader will want to know in such tiny detail who said what to whom and when. Much of the account could have been condensed to advantage. The extracts from Mr Snepp's own diaries are invariably well-written and intriguing. I would dearly like to know who is referred to here, for instance:

> I was called to the front office just after lunch today to brief an old journalist who writes for a British magazine. He's been a conduit for CIA handouts for years and I knew at once this was going to be friendly fire. He winked at me, wrinkled his nose, and asked me to go as slowly as I could so he could get down every word verbatim.

There weren't many British journalists at the time, still fewer working for magazines. It *can't* have been Richard West. I don't think it can have been me, although it's true that I don't have the shorthand. Any suggestions?

The purpose of Mr Snepp's work was to set the record straight after the attempt by the CIA and the State Department to depict the evacuation of Saigon as a great success. Not surprisingly, the CIA have rounded on the author and accused him of disloyalty. He is not disloyal. On the contrary, he remains an upright citizen, with a loyalty to his past colleagues and profession. He is sometimes inaccurate, sometimes bigoted, but never, I think, dishonest. No wonder he got no further in his profession – a profession he joined, by the way, because he did not wish to serve in Vietnam.

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Among this week's contributors:

V. S. PRITCHETT's *Selected Stories* was published by Chatto in May this year.

JAMES FENTON was a freelance correspondent in Indochina from 1973-75. His new pamphlet of poems, *A Vacant Possession*, has just been published by The New Review.

ROSEMARY DINNAGE is the author of *The Handicapped Child*.

CHRISTOPHER HILL is Master of Balliol College, Oxford. His more recent books include *Antichrist in 17th century England* and *The World Turned Upside Down*.

PETER CONRAD's *Shandyism: The Character of Romantic Irony* was published this month.

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Maurice Richardson

Make No Bones

The Spanish Anarchists by MURRAY BOOKCHIN *Free Life Editions* £7.95

I find the Great Anarch – Mikhail Bakunin, a huge effervescent Russian of noble origin – a distinctly attractive figure. So, for a time, does Marx. On 4 November 1864 he writes to Engels:

> Bakunin sends you greetings. I must say I like him very much and better than formerly . . . On the whole he is one of the few people whom after years I find to have developed forwards instead of backwards.

Four years later he was carrying on about him like a paranoid ward-heeler. If only Marx had been more tactful . . . but that's like wishing Cleopatra's nose had been an elephant's trunk.

The reasons why anarchism caught on in Spain are made clear by Murray Bookchin in this excellent study. This, the first volume, takes you from 1868 to the eve of the Civil War in 1936. (I look forward to reading him on various commentators from Hemingway to Hugh Thomas, whom, already, he catches out in a terminological inexactitude.) Why 1868? Because this was the date – late October – of the Italian anarchist Giuseppi Fanelli's visit to Spain. The tall, heavily-bearded Italian arrived at Barcelona from Geneva. It was the first time he had been in Spain and there was every reason to suppose his trip would be a fiasco.

Bakunin had raised barely enough to pay his fare. Fanelli could speak hardly a sentence in Spanish and began by quarrelling with Elie Reclus, the French anthropologist who was his only acquaintance in the city. However, at his first meeting in Madrid he established such a rapport with his audience – a gang of workers of very 'advanced ideas' – that all barriers went down. He stayed on for several weeks and scored a triumph. The anarchist seed which he planted began to sprout almost immediately. Fanelli never came back to Spain; he died eight years later of tuberculosis.

Bakunin's doctrine of anarchist collectivism, Bookchin points out, must be distinguished from Kropotkin's anarchist communism. It was particularly suitable to the traditional collectivist aspects of the Russian village, between which and the Spanish pueblo there is a clear affinity. Bakunin's stress on conspiracy can be understood only against a Latin and a Russian background, where it was essential for survival. This was something, suggests Bookchin, that Marx with his admiration for the well-disciplined, centralised German proletariat could not comprehend. I am reminded of the famous pub-crawl by Marx and Engels along the Tottenham Court Road, recorded in the *Memoirs* of Wilhelm Liebknecht but omitted in English translations owing to communist priggery. Arriving at about the fifteenth pub Marx got into conversation with some men in the saloon bar and started haranguing them on the superiority of German culture. 'What music', he demanded, 'has England ever produced to compare with Mozart and Beethoven? Pah!' Tempers rose high and the company nearly came to blows. Out in the street Marx started throwing stones at lamp-posts. There was a cry of 'Ware rozzers' and Marx, Engels and Liebknecht had to run for it with the law at their heels. But Karl had showed the Teutonic chauvinist cloven hoof.

The role of geography in Spanish history is at once apparent when you fly over the Iberian peninsula, spread out like a lion's hide. The contrasts between the arid treeless plateau of Castile – freezing in winter, burning hot in summer, divided by mountain ranges – the fertile coastal regions where rice is grown, and the great green plains of Andalusia with their latifundia surviving from the Roman occupation offers a living history lesson. However, the uniformity of the main agricultural regions is more apparent than real, as Bookchin remarks. Particularly suitable to the anarchist doctrine are the mountain villages of Andalusia and the small holdings of Murcia.

Does he idealise? Perhaps a bit, but he makes no bones about being partisan. It was a bit tactless, or disingenuous, to mention Nestor Makhno as if he were someone to be proud of. Anyone who has read the terrifying and fantastic description in Konstantin Paustovsky's *In That Dawn* of Makhno's train, with its crew of crazies shooting up a peaceful station, will feel he was a pretty heavy liability to any movement or troop, unless it were the Marquis de Sade's Irregulars. But this is by the way. In general, as Bookchin shows, the moral tone of the Spanish anarchists was lofty indeed. This was especially true of the rural peasant anarchists. 'The anarchists of the sierras walked like unblemished prophets among the people.' But the Civil Guard made its own laws. You get the feel of it in the poems of Lorca. In the cities proletarian anarchism drifted increasingly towards syndicalism. From 1882 the phrase 'anarco-sindicalistas' was heard more and more often. Meanwhile the misery of the poor continued to beggar description. As late as the 1930s, at an experimental pig farm in Andalusia, the peasants really were living much worse than the pigs.

A large part of the book describes the long series of little and not so little risings that went on throughout the 19th century and early 20th, beginning – again in 1868, December – with the one in Cadiz led by Fermin Salvochea. One of the more sensational, in 1909 in Barcelona, was known as Tragic Week because the police lost a total of eight men against a possible six hundred citizens.

Gradually we approach the birth of the Republic, via the abdication of Alfonso XIII and the regime of Primo de Rivera, by far the least malevolent of dictators, just like a colonel in a Spanish musical comedy with the traditional *tonto* (half-wit) for a son. By the end we have met anarchist leaders of the 1930s, Durutti and Garcia Oliver. A rather striking omission is the Spanish-American war of which I can find no trace, nor of the ideological ferment that followed it, producing books like *Idearium Espanol* by the neo-Senecan Angel Ganivet. But as a lesson in Spanish history it is delightfully stimulating. And what a relief to be free from both communist sectarianism and liberal trimming.

Rosemary Dinnage

Knuts

Conversations with Children by R. D. LAING *Penguin* 70p.

R. D. Laing has protested against being considered a gloomy fellow who sees no hope for the human race, and wants to show that he has another side; also he has a writing problem ('*Natasha*: why are you feeling sad? . . . *Ronnie*: I want to write things but I don't seem able to. *Natasha*: why are you not able to? *Ronnie*: I don't know'). So he has cribbed from a couple of non-alienated, un-mystified human beings and presents, without comment, scraps of conversation he has recorded over six years with his youngest children.

Laing is into communication. He has always enjoyed repartee and dialogue, he says, and has spent much of his life studying miscommunication, the deadly nuances of 'this division of hell'; now he wants to reproduce the interlace of dialogue, rather than the knots: 'the free and open space between us where we can play with reality together, where we question and answer, inquire into what is the case and what is not, for the sheer heaven of it'. He could have had a worse idea, though his kids are no cuter than yours or mine. *Conversations with Children* takes about half an hour to read and, on the whole, not much longer to forget, but the only boring thing

NEW FICTION

David Galloway's first full-length novel, **A Family Album** (£5.95) is an extended contemplation of passing time in three generations of a Southern States family, seen through six snaps taken from their photograph album. '. . . an intense, lovely and surprising new novel.' — *The New York Times Review of Books.*

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A special award of this exciting new prize, guaranteeing publication in seven European languages, was made to the imprisoned South African poet Breyten Breytenbach. **In Africa even the Flies are Happy** (£4.95) is his first collection to appear in English and one which will certainly establish his reputation as a major poet. The prize itself was awarded to the West German poet, Erich Fried, whose powerful, double-edged and political **100 Poems without a Country** (£4.95) is now available.

IMMORTALITY IS MAN'S NATURAL CONDITION!

or so the 278 year old man in Heathcote Williams's outstanding new play, **The Immortalist** (£1.50), makes you believe in a pyrotechnical display of verbal anarchy. 'A dazzling brilliant sport on the nature of time, ageing and death.'— *The Guardian.*

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about it is Laing's claim that it is unprecedentedly significant.

The Laing children say their prayers, are conventionally Oedipal, and show no signs of being paralysed by psychological understanding like most psychiatrists' and psychoanalysts' children. The only really Laingian note is struck by their father ('don't do that again unless I know it isn't you'). Like most children, however, they are natural existentialists: if she is half German and half Scottish, Natasha asks, what is the whole of her? She has an invisible car: that is, she has one wheel, and a car with invisible doors, invisible seats, and invisible engine, and three invisible wheels. Adam also has metaphysical concerns: 'this stairway wasn't even *here*, until they put it here.' They have a rather fine eight-year-old friend who cuts through incipient knots admirably: 'I'm sorry I only allow myself to be kissed by my mummy and other relatives.' The only buffoon is an adult called Monty who comments, on the perfectly reasonable question 'can God kill himself?', that it means 'does God masturbate?', which means 'does Daddy masturbate?', which means 'can she do it with you instead of Mummy?' I hope Laing included this to show how much children's conversation is often to be preferred to adults'.

He says he deliberately decided, after some thought, not to accompany the dialogues with a theoretical essay, nor to footnote them. I am glad he didn't, though I can think of some of the things he might have said. That children are concerned with where they end and other people begin; with what time means, and how to disentangle it from space; with thereness and not-thereness; that they hate and love ungovernably; have a natural gift for ritual and symbolic action; live with the most abstract and most concrete conceptions side by side. At times they see death everywhere, as matter-of-factly as Laing does when he says:

> such was the richness of their earlier epoch, before the onslaught of language that our pleasure having [*sic*] our children talk to us was tinged with sadness and nostalgia for the subtlety of their music and dance before they spoke. It's sometimes difficult to keep up with one's children: not to mourn, in gaining a girl, a boy, the loss of babyhood and infancy. And by the time this book is being read, the children depicted in its pages will already have grown out of their clothes several times.

Perhaps it is not entirely ridiculous to say, as Laing does, that his book raises theoretical considerations within 'psychoanalysis, developmental psychology, communication theory, and anthropology'; so, at a pinch, might any children's conversations. What is preposterous is to claim that no conversations with children have ever been published before – except insofar as his actual presentation, in short lines like a theatre script, is concerned. Darwin's 'Biographical Sketch of an Infant' was published in *Mind* in 1877 and Shinn's *Notes on the Development of a Child* in 1893. Bühler, Preyer, Guillaume, Stern, all used children's conversations in their studies of child psychology around the turn of the century. Above all, Piaget's neglected early works include carefully reported conversations and play sequences, *Play, Dreams and Imagination* in particular containing a mass of vivid verbatim dialogue between the author and his children, purposefully arranged to illustrate his account of the growth of the symbolic imagination.

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Christopher Hill

Property Men

Law and the Rise of Capitalism by MICHAEL E. TIGAR and MADELEINE R. LEVY *Monthly Review Press* £9.75

This exciting book was published in February of this year, but so far I have seen no review of it. It would be interesting to know why. I hope it was not a consequence of the recent philistine attack on 'marxists and radicals' sponsored by NAFF. Dr Tigar and Ms Levy have indeed written a marxist book. But one need not be a marxist to recognise that law deals with social relations, and therefore that changes in the law should not be considered in abstraction from the society. This pioneering book asks brave questions which can be welcomed without necessarily accepting all the answers.

If I had written a book of this sort, I should have expected to begin in or about the 16th century. So did Tigar and Levy, until they got down to cases and found themselves driven further and further back. Ironically, they found that it was the Catholic church which shaped the legal ideology of merchants.

> For our purposes there are four principal ways in which the Church affected the growth of the bourgeoisie: (1) it protected itinerant merchants as a species of pilgrim; (2) it applied great resources to the study of Roman law, including commercial law; (3) it entered into the dispute over the morality of trade, with results that were in the long run favourable to the bourgeoisie; and (4) it developed a system of courts and of procedure.

If canon law helped the development of internal trade, the Crusades expedited the growth of foreign trade.

> The most significant and permanent beneficiaries were the merchants of the West, who established trading outposts which could and did survive military and political changes. These outposts could be profitable to whoever ruled the region, through duties, taxes and tolls.

The Crusades occasioned 'extensive borrowings from the legal learning and mercantile practice of the Arab and Byzantine civilisations'. The role of the Italian merchant republics in this process is less surprising.

The authors also show how the rise of national states and the extension of royal power also ultimately worked to the advantage of merchants on whose wealth governments relied for taxes. In the 13th century Philippe de Beaumanoir emphasised that 'kings are sovereigns over all, and . . . can make such laws as please them for the common profit of their kingdoms, and that which they enact must be obeyed'. In 1217 the King of France was spoken of as an 'emperor', meaning that he owed allegiance to no other feudal lord. Struggles within new industries gave a ruler the chance to play off one class against another, to become a sort of Hobbist arbiter.

The real test case was the law of landed property:

> The institution of property in the sense it came to have in bourgeois law posits a person (*persona*) and a thing (*res*), joined by the legal norm called property or ownership. Human society is dissolved into isolated individuals, and the world of goods split up into discrete items. One can no longer speak of a duty to use property or behave towards others in a certain way: all such duties as may be imposed by law are *prima facie* derogations from the fundamental 'right of property'.

Henry VIII first tried by the Statute of Uses to 'tighten his grip on feudal revenues', but found that to succeed in this he had to agree to the Statute of Wills, which 'made the greater part of English land transmissible by will . . . another victory for the bourgeois property norm'.

'From its beginning,' the authors suggest,

> equity jurisdiction was meant by the Crown to be used for mercantile causes, such as when the sovereign was bound by treaty to see that foreign merchants had an efficacious tribunal. It is likely indeed that the mercantile courts of the City of London, which also had cognisance of merchant matters, were responsible for much of the legal learning put into practice by the Chancellors [notably Sir Thomas More]. Merchant causes could also be held in courts established by royally chartered corporations of merchants, the corporation having a partial or total monopoly on a particular branch of trade.

The authors have an interesting analysis of the way in which towards the end of the 16th century the common-law courts admitted the mercantile notion of contract. In this light they suggest new thoughts about the 17th-century alliance of common lawyers and Parliament and the role of Sir Edward Coke. Religious opponents of the old regime came to be included in the alliance in consequence of their traditional opposition to the oath *ex officio*, and so to the procedures of the prerogative courts. At common law a man was, in theory at least, not called upon to incriminate himself. The establishment, in the later 17th century, of the independence of juries from judges, and so from pressure by the executive, 'ratified a further dismantling of Tudor institutions'. But – a point which the authors miss – a statute of 1665 said that jurors should possess freehold land worth at least £20 *per annum* – ten times the Parliamentary franchise; and so, like Habeas Corpus, the independence of juries worked to the advantage of the men of property rather than of the poor.

How many of these ideas will win acceptance remains to be seen. But they are to be welcomed because they break down barriers between disciplines. Just as the history of religion is too important to be left to theologians, and the history of science too important to be left to scientists, so legal

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history should not be left to lawyers. 'Internalist' history is inevitably distorted, since ideas must relate to the society which produces them. Dr Tigar and Ms Levy have performed a valuable service in opening up for discussion this area of social and intellectual history.

Jeremy Treglown

At Court

The Theatres of George Devine by IRVING WARDLE *Cape* £8.50

Everything changed, people writing about British theatre still sometimes say, on 8 May 1956 – the first night of *Look Back In Anger* at George Devine's Royal Court. Before that, everything was, oh, Agatha Christie and William Douglas Home. Well, I suppose they're still going strong, but, you know, Christopher Fry and terrible musicals. I mean, look at the 1954-5 season! Terence Rattigan, Thornton Wilder . . . very well, what about *Kismet* at the Stoll, then? After all, the Stoll doesn't even exist today. And as for *Kismet,* nobody under 20 has even . . . er, sorry, yes, you're right, it *is* on at the Shaftesbury now, but it's coming off soon (they're bringing in *Godspell*), and anyway, what about the Old Vic? Everything began at the Old Vic – the RSC, the National, the English Stage Company itself. And now Prospect are installed there. No, indeed, not a very new broom – *Saint Joan, The Lady's Not For Burning, Twelfth Night,* not a *risky* season – but it's difficult when you're dependent on tourists, and Devine never claimed he had changed things for good.

On the contrary, in fact, what he said was that he had 'utterly failed', and this sense of general failure circumscribing the limited but heroically achieved successes makes Irving Wardle's meticulous book very moving. On the one hand, he sees him as having helped narrow the gap between commercial and 'art' theatre, and as having discovered and nurtured new talent of every kind: in writers, of course (the ESC staged 126 new plays during his ten-year regime), but also in directors, 20 of whom were trained by him at the Court, and in the hundreds of actors he taught both there and, earlier, at Michel Saint-Denis's London Theatre Studio and at the brilliantly influential Old Vic Centre – destroyed in the early Fifties by the ineptitude of its governors. On the other hand, Wardle admits that 'the hope, very strong in Devine's lifetime, that the theatre could occupy a central place in the country's intellectual life, has evaporated'.

The story is partly a personal one, sensitively related by Wardle, of Devine's unhappy upbringing and failed marriage, but much more a political one about irreconcilable oppositions of ideology and temperament being edged by him into working compromise. He was a ruthlessly shrewd operator. In the early Sixties, for example, he responded warmly to the National's predatory advances on the Court and agreed to the establishment of a joint committee whose existence he used (along with Olivier's name) as a profitable bargaining tool for the Court elsewhere. But, knowing from experience how damaging it can be for a small organisation to find itself feeding a large one, he gave nothing directly in return, and the committee never met.

'Never resign' was his pragmatic motto – a belated one, learned the hard way. The closure of the Old Vic Centre, Wardle shows, owed a lot to his and his co-directors' defeatism in the face of the governors' philistine incompetence. The modesty which was part of his personal magnetism could spoil things. He failed more often than he succeeded as an actor, particularly in his early days ('Well dear,' Lilian Baylis told him in the wings of the Vic in 1932, 'you've had your chance and they don't like you'), and he didn't always take control as a director – too impressed by Ralph Richardson to keep him on the lines he wanted in *Volpone*, and by Samuel Beckett to be able to over-ride some of his less theatrical ideas in *Endgame*.

In the last case, such weakness as he showed may be attributable to his having operated, typically, on too many fronts. The administrator and *dramaturg* not only directed this innovative work but played one of the leads. It is one of the many paradoxes fascinatingly revealed by Wardle that the anti-establishment pioneer of collective theatre was also a Victorian actor-manager. Whatever you think of modern British theatre, many of the best things about it owe more to Devine than to any other individual – particularly the insatiable demand for new plays; the egalitarianism (including financial egalitarianism) of companies like those at Glasgow and the Liverpool Everyman; and the existence of busy studio theatres attached to all the big companies, not only the Court's own Theatre Upstairs, but the RSC's Warehouse and Other Place, and similar studios at the good reps. But this powerful, flinty ideologue got on as well with Rex Harrison as he did with Brecht. The founder of the company that has given us Edward Bond and David Hare began his career with a silver-topped cane as President of OUDS and died – more or less literally – playing the aristocratic drag queen in Osborne's *A Patriot for Me*. He opposed Peter Hall's Genet-esque idea of the theatre as a brothel with his own, that it is 'a temple of ideas'. But as he himself showed, in a life which epitomised the world it was given to, it's really a bit of both.

This English

How to combat the nob's pronoun: mentally recast the sentence in a straightforward subject-verb-object construction, and your ear will infallibly tell you whether to opt for a nominative or accusative pronoun. Look at our first three entries – 'Gielgud asked I'? 'The Underground is a boon to we'? 'I must say her was the calmest person present'? We follow with two really cloth-eared slips – the sort of writing that hears no evil. £3 for the first entry, £2 for the others printed. Paste entries on a postcard.

☐ When we were casting for *The Lady's Not for Burning,* Gielgud asked Pamela Brown and I if we'd look at two very nervous young people he was auditioning. **Sheridan Morley** *The Times* (John Sullivan)

☐ The Piccadilly Underground Line to Heathrow is a boon to we baboons who fly a lot. **Larry Adler** *What's On In London* (Malcolm R. Jackson)

☐ A packed Court 14 despaired for their British heroine, whom I must say, was the calmest person present. **John Mason** *Daily Telegraph* (E. B. Uvarov)

☐ Mayor Has Tete-a-Tete With Heads. **Headline** *Harrow Observer* (A. C. Newby)

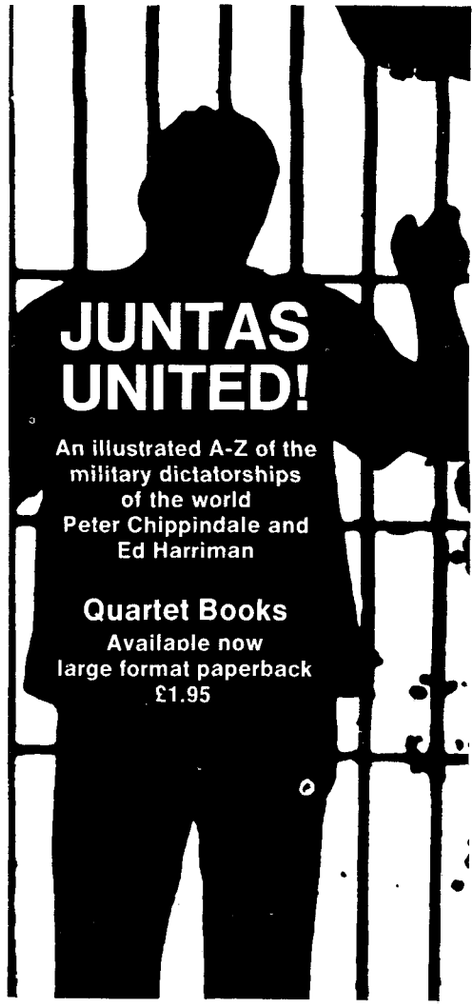
☐ Mt Kilimanjaro, the breathtaking backdrop for the Serena Lodge at Kenya's Amboseli National Park. Swim in the lovely pool while you drink it all in. *Kenya Tourist Office* (A. W. Wyness)

Christopher Hitchens

The Red Owl

1968 and After: Inside the Revolution by TARIQ ALI *Blond & Briggs* £5.25

It hasn't exactly been ten years for the locust. In 1968 Western Europe was still disfigured by the presence of Franco, Salazar, De Gaulle and Papadopoulos. Vietnam was being burned alive, and the returning soldiers who opposed the war were seen, at the end of the year, being truncheoned in their wheelchairs. LBJ was conducting his breakfast conferences at which the day's targets for annihilation were settled. Viewed in this perspective, we have made some decent progress since that time, and there is no doubt that in all the major changes a role was played by the '68 generation'. Tom Paine once observed that to



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have had a hand in two revolutions was to have lived to some purpose, and Tariq Ali here lays his own (and his party's) claim to the great tradition.

Of course, looked at from another standpoint, 1968 was a reach of time which stretched from the murder of Guevara and took in the Chicago Convention and the Mexico Olympic massacre to culminate in the extinction of Dubcek. Not so good. And since then the Left has suffered one traumatic humiliation at the hands of the enemy (Chile) and one terrible self-inflicted defeat (Portugal). Also, as Tariq Ali points out forcefully, the post-revolutionary societies of Indochina have not turned out as decoratively as we might have wished. Certainly the 'discredited Stalinism', at which we all hooted and jeered in the brave days, is now on the war-path on a world scale. What is to be done?

The first thing to avoid is nostalgia and sentimentality. To be candid, I have never understood why Tariq Ali is so much weaker in print than he is in person. There are repeated and embarrassing flashbacks in his book, which actually opens with an affectionate pen-portrait of Lawrence Daly making a fool of himself in North Vietnam. Tariq Ali belongs to an organisation which takes the bizarre and reactionary view that the Soviet Union is, despite historical deformations, a superior form of society. It may therefore seem to him that he has made a point when he bemoans the *absence* of Russian intervention in Asia at the time. As his book appears on the stands, Russian and Chinese rivalry is fuelling a third Indo-China war, laced with racial overtones and oriental despotism.

The second error to be avoided – and the more insidious and fashionable one – is that of cynicism. Here, Tariq can be acquitted. He is right to believe that there was a thin red thread linking Prague to Paris, and he is admirable in the inconspicuous way in which he has tried to follow that thread since the '68 headlines evaporated. Although the book was obviously written hurriedly, in the intervals between meetings, producing shoe-string newspapers and raising fivers for new duplicators, it does have the note of authentic commitment. What is depressing is the way in which it learns only from other people's mistakes.

The main headings are Chile, Czechoslovakia and Portugal. On Chile, he points out correctly that the Allende government could not have hoped to survive by playing 'bourgeois democratic' rules. There are some crude formulations in the argument, but since he has been so derided on this point it ought to be said that he makes the case very well. Those who don't like the dilemma should address themselves to the lords of capital and credit who faced Chile with a choice between starvation and dictatorship. On Czechoslovakia the same apparently 'ruthless' logic is unconvincing. The Dubcek regime was a huge advance on its forerunner, but it was in no position to organise mass popular resistance to the Soviet Union until well after it was too late. The number of 'could haves' in this chapter is dismally significant. But it does contain some splendid echoes and quotations from that moment of renaissance and they still bring a lump to the throat.

On Portugal, the worst failure of the marxist Left since 1945, Ali is unsparing in his criticism of the infantile and disordered behaviour of so many comrades. The attempt to bypass the issue of democracy was, as it had to be, a ghastly failure. I must say I wish I had heard him putting at the time some of the points he makes here. But the owl of Minerva still seems able to take wing only at dusk. Tariq Ali's owl is painfully learning the difference between 1905 and 1917.

Valentine Cunningham

Hah?

Percival and the Presence of God by JIM HUNTER *Faber* £4.95
Super-Folks by ROBERT MAYER *Angus & Robertson* £4.95
The Monkey King by TIMOTHY MO *Deutsch* £5.25

Jim Hunter's new novel comes as a pleasurable jolt. When last heard from, he was still a mere drizzler about bourgeois plights, apparently stuck at talking down the liberal dilemmas of over-extended families with what seemed excessive calm and paining length. But *Percival and the Presence of God* eschews both the old Hunter and the modern twee its title hints at (Percival, it might be, publisher and bon viveur, who found divinity in a handful of macrobiotica). Instead, it's about that old hunter, the original Percival, quester after the Grail and King Arthur's court. New country, indeed, for our author, but one into the middle of whose *res* he plunges us with the myth-making aplomb of the Golding of *The Spire* and the narrative terseness of Eliot's 'The Journey of the Magi'. Certainly Percival, in relating what is now his old story, has learnt from William Golding the force of a rockily consonantal, glottal-glutted prose for jutting into our present with the hard shock of the past.

It's Percival himself who has learnt from Golding, because although the brutality of his spear-throwing prowess is bluntly ancient, and the stuff of his visionary encounter with the fisher-lord's bleeding side and the Grail and miraculously bloody spear is glowingly medieval, his reflections, like his sex-life, are most modern. He didn't, so to say, lurk by the canal with Eliot's fisher-king, but sprinted for the library behind the gasworks to mug up Jessie Weston's footnotes. So, plausibly, his questions are ours. Can God 'mean more for you' than the warm heaven of Lady Whiteflower's wolf-fur bed? Is Percival's vision of the Grail as real as the women toying with his phallic spear-tip and drunkenly splashing wine? When the reputed castle of Arthur is found to be a gutted ruin, why persist as if the knights' code, the imperative of quest, still commanded meaning? Heroically human, though, he will go on; and, heroically credulous (with Bonhoeffer and against the novel's humanist epigraph from Iris Murdoch), he will 'continue as if I still had God's attention'. And he will keep telling his story, even if it be an idiot's babble: for a mad girl's jabber saved him from dying trapped and alone in Arthur's burned out chapel. It's a faith in God and in narrative that comes through most impressively.

There's more demythologising from *Super-Folks*, and demythology that, like all its kind, from Percival discovering a glandular God between Whiteflower's thighs to a hip Rupert Bear fellating a Sixties comic Snow White, cheerfully verges on the blasphemous. Robert Mayer's America has gone beyond the comic-book, its problems no longer superable by the children's heroes. Kennedy, Snoopy, Batman and Robin have bought it, Superman is missing, Captain Mantra is in a loony bin, and New York is peopled with sedate ghosts of the formerly famous – Bella Abzug drives a cab, Greta Garbo is into deodorant ads, Bill Buckley is a prison guard, Marilyn Monroe a nurse, Holden Caulfield a famous proctologist. Above all Indigo, most superlative supermensch of them all, is, in the person of David Brinkley, subsiding into domestic middle age in Middleville: almost too podgy for his flying suit, no longer darkening the door of Max Givenchy, tailor to the heroes, nor frightening off evil-doers. And innocence has departed with innocent heroics, in a rush of copulating baby-sitters and high-school chums turned strippers (like Bermuda Triangle: so called 'because so many men have gone down there'). The end of an age of faith is being most devoutly mourned. Happily, however, there's a plot by Russians and other nasties to tempt Indigo from retirement to destruction: so he's lured back to rescue more children from fires, battle Demoniac on the fringes of the universe, and re-assert simple beliefs.

The theme is nominally attractive but the tone of *Super-Folks* belies its cravings. The unrelenting knowingness of its contrivance (fiction critics are even detectable in a roster of crooks) undermines its requiem for innocence. Its own plot's doings are as exuberantly dubious as the liberated Cinderellas and gay Peter Pans that Indigo once left to their own deviancies. And blaspheming the heroes you profess to adore, however jokily, remains a stubbornly twisted way of defending the faith.

The Chinese monkey king, we learn from Timothy Mo's yeasty first novel, 'always manage to get himself out of the trouble he got into in the end'. Just like Wallace Nolasco, in fact, our bit-Portuguese hero – slugging it out monkey trick for trick with the crafty family of Cantonese Poons he's married into. As with Wallace's favourite *Reader's Digest*, the contest is high on the delighting nugget, the wrily jesting bit ('What the point of reading all the long boring stuffs hah?'). True, the heavy load of grunts and *Wahs* occasionally makes Hong Kong and its hinterland seem too much life on *The Water Margin*, but generally syntax in the less than perfect tense ('you stayed here, Mary'; 'no, I came') and other ethnic manglings of English ('wiper in our bosoms', and such) stay funny.

Food plays a mouth-watering part in the novel, if not actually on Nolasco's plate at the Poons. It's fiction as Chinese menu, and that can't, of course, fail to satisfy (not like that Western stuff: 'you always got hungry one hour after you were eating it'). Irony is unremitting ('the lacerations were quick to heal but the fractured ribs and concussion she had sustained when the ambulance men dropped her were more serious'), but less palling than appalling. And the dwelt-on grisliness – slimes and pongs, nose-bogeys, phlegm-fringed beaches, restaurant paths 'greyed with pancakes of hardened gum' – can't all be England's or Hollywood's fault ('Custer last stand, hah?'). Like Nolasco's blood, Hong Kong life and blames come richly mixed.

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Benedict Nightingale

Hell is a City

Savage Amusement *Warehouse*
A Family *Haymarket*
The Lady's Not for Burning *Old Vic*
Under Milk Wood *Mayfair*

Nineteen-eighty-two is when the Howard Brenton of *The Churchill Play* expects a coalition government to begin building concentration camps for striking workers, and the Howard Barker of *That Good Between Us* foresees a Labour Home Secretary allowing the British secret police to interrogate unruly leftists in 'real depth'. The latest addition to our burgeoning Theatre of Cataclysm is *Savage Amusement,* set in the same fell year and written by one Peter Flannery, a bold new talent with a specific strength unavailable to his fellow-futurists. His scenario is based, not on generalised deduction and inspired guesswork, but on what looks and sounds like intimate observation of the decay of a particular city, namely Manchester. Some while ago I myself lived in mouldering Rusholme, where his young drop-outs have their squat, and, like them, I used sometimes to go and boggle at Hulme, at that time a wasteland of empty spaces and boarded-up terraces in whose interstices the odd family was still perilously surviving. The decline of the former into a vigilante-patrolled slum, and of the latter into a menacing jungle, would not have seemed too paranoid a forecast then, and certainly doesn't now.

Precisely how will it happen? Mr Flannery's concentration on the inner city means that he's a bit uninformative about the Britain beyond; but, in so far as one can piece together his clues and hints, he appears to be suggesting that a Tory administration, reactionary housing legislation, cutbacks in government spending, high unemployment, a rule-obsessed Department of Social Security and a tougher police force have combined to leave his characters floundering like fish in a polluted pond. A young wife, her eye blackened by a debt-collector, deserts her marriage for her parents, unable to take any more. Meanwhile, her husband degenerates from a happy-go-lucky optimist into a red-eyed cynic, from good graduate material into something constitutionally unemployable. That sounds, I daresay, the kind of exemplary story that committed writers with bees in their bonnets all-too-easily and only-too-predictably concoct nowadays. Take my word, first that Mr Flannery's characterisation is quirkier and more plausible than that, second that his particular bee has a buzz like a chainsaw and a sting to match.

It's nicely enough acted by Jill Baker, Lesley Manville, Iain Mitchell – and Charles Wegner, who does especially well to engineer the tricky transition from laughing boy to confirmed loafer. But the performance of the evening comes from an actor new to me, David Threlfall. He brings a pair of beady, mistrustful eyes, nostrils that palpably flare when danger threatens, and what I would be willing to swear are animal whiskers twitching on his upper lip, to the part of an illiterate scavenger who scratches together a furtive living via shadowy contacts in the backstreets and marauding sorties to the shelves of Tesco. As the educated find themselves increasingly lost and helpless, this two-legged gopher comes into his own, an untamed creature that instinctively adapts to the deteriorating environment. It is, as it might well not have been, an unpatronising piece of characterisation, a nature-study lifted from the files of an unusually sympathetic human zoologist. But it is, and is meant to be, also an omen of the anarchy liable to occur in the urban rat-trap if we persevere in the irresponsibility so feelingly diagnosed by Mr Flannery.

Nowadays the truly revolutionary play about the family would be one that implied that marriage could be fulfilling, childhood serene, and the relationship between parents and their offspring healthy and rewarding. Ronald Harwood, needless to say, hasn't written it. On the contrary, he has flung yet another handful of poisoned entrails at us poor strugglers. In the sickly world of *A Family* a girl can retire to bed showing all the symptoms of emotional suffocation and nervous extinction, and her mother will still harangue her for her selfishness and her patriarchal grandfather still gum up her ears with mosaic homilies about privilege, loyalty and duty. As it turns out, the illness is simply a ruse, an attempt to escape from her nearest and dearest with the connivance of her uncle, the doctor; but Mr Harwood's own evidence leaves this revelation looking a bit of a sell-out. His Kilner clan lives so claustrophobically and loves so oppressively that any adolescent who managed to emerge from its bosom without having succumbed to schizophrenia would be behaving rather improbably.

Actually, there's something improbable about a good deal of the play. About the father's tale of having parachuted into war-torn Italy in order to discover if his son, the doctor, was alive and fighting with the partisans. About his unflagging, unending pride in this long-ago piece of paternal heroism. About the love-affair the old man forced the boy to renounce, and about the language in which the doctor now persistently remembers that romance – 'we won't be parted, Adela, on the lives of our dead comrades'. Mr Harwood writes sensitively and sometimes wittily, but several of his more important moments occur on a plane that I, for one, found hard to identify with knotty reality; and, consequently, he left me unmoved at the conclusion, which is supposed to sum up the pathos of a father-son relationship consisting of one part dire resentment to two parts ignominious devotion. There is a luminous cast: Irene Handl, Eleanor Bron, Trevor Peacock, Harry Andrews at his craggiest as the aged paterfamilias, Paul Scofield charismatically creaking and mumbling through the part of the abstracted self-absorbed medico. But truth, with its incongruities and unpredictabilities and deflating oddities, largely eludes them, and so, I fear, does pain.

Some years ago I made a triumphant début in Pseuds Corner with the statement that watching Christopher Fry's sunny little romance, *The Lady's Not for Burning,* was rather like being trampled on by fairies, or sprayed with raspberry soufflé and licked clean by Siamese cats. The latest revival, with Derek Jacobi fastidiously ironic as the man who wants to be hanged and Eileen Atkins rapt and solemn as the woman who doesn't want to be grilled, left me feeling no less exotically besmirched. Bernard Levin argues that Fry's indiscriminate euphuisms are acceptable because he knows very well he is writing them. Indeed, he sends up his own practice by capping a characteristically pretty speech with the coyly apologetic, 'what a wonderful thing is metaphor'. But just because a man who specialises in tracing elaborate patterns in icing on the top of cakes is candid enough to confess himself a pastry-cook, does it really follow that someone of my diabetic disposition should promptly be converted to a taste for sugar? A question that, I fear, leaves me with only half a breath for the Welsh National Theatre Company's *Milk Wood,* so austere, astringent yet well-spoken that those who, like myself, always tend to resist Thomas's fishing-boat-bobbing prose and roaring-boyo attitudes may find themselves strangely melted.

Opera

Peter Conrad

Lab Report

Così fan tutte *Glyndebourne*
Norma *Covent Garden*

Glyndebourne, after a dour and saturnine *Don Giovanni* and a tawdry *Die Zauberflöte,* now has a worthy Mozart production on show: Peter Hall's new *Così fan tutte* is abrasive and unsettling, scouring away the tired gags which adhere to this work and validating emotions which other stagings mock. Hall's experimental, collaborative process of rehearsal, during which he explores motives and responses with his singers and inductively plays with alternative interpretations, exactly fits *Così fan tutte,* because it is an opera about an analytical experiment, conducted by Don Alfonso under rigorously controlled scientific conditions. Instead of the usual succession of impostures, in which the factitious emotions of the women are no more than a convenient disguise like the exotic dress of the men, Hall's characters are made to suffer a genuinely painful perplexity as their frailty is clinically demonstrated to them. The opera in this version is not a glib libel against women but an account of innocence traduced.

The production justifies its heroines. Fiordiligi and Dorabella, as punctilious about honour as their military sweethearts, swear an oath in their first duet and sentence themselves to torture if they break it. The action

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awakens them to their sexual susceptibility, but they experience this ardour as a betrayal and a chastisement. Their arias are therefore not the usual absurd mimicry of operatic hyperbole but distraught confessions. Dorabella (the brilliant Maria Ewing) sings 'Smanie implacibili' prostrate on a chaise-longue like an invalid odalisque. Fiordiligi's 'Come scoglio' is her anxious attempt to convince herself, not a bravura rebuff to the intruders. In the first finale, the sisters have a nervous, shamed intimacy; in the second, they repine in miserable pensiveness while their spaghetti cools. Agreeing on the exchange of lovers, they sing 'Prendero quel brunettino' with giggling hysteria, both elated and terrified by the sense of erotic trespass. They are a Rousseauesque pair, for whom sex is a physical wound which makes one mentally uneasy: the body asserts a will of its own which the mind can't withstand.

As Hall sees it, the women aren't to blame. Their desires are titillated, but their good nature is also practised upon. Because Ferrando and Guglielmo are so ready in the first scene to punish Alfonso's slanders with their swords, their later pretended or threatened suicides aren't preposterous bluffing but dangerous blackmail. Despina coaxes the sisters to help them after they've drunk poison by appealing to their common humanity; Ferrando bludgeons the confused Fiordiligi into submission by telling her that, unless she gives way, his death will be on her conscience. The women are manipulated by a street-smart, sluttish Despina, the men by a case-hardened Alfonso, who isn't (as sepulchrally sung by Stafford Dean) the conventional cynic but a depressed misanthrope, saddened by the promptitude with which human beings confirm his low opinion of them. During the laughing trio he sits apart, sickened and regretful, while Ferrando and Guglielmo relish their success. In his detachment there is a bleak moral sensitivity. He doesn't find the exposure of innocence funny, and in his brief sermon he reproves the audience for laughing. At the end, half-apologetically, he re-assorts the couples, protecting them from the self-knowledge he has cruelly forced on them.

At Covent Garden, an excellent season concludes with an infuriating, intermittently superb *Norma*. Montserrat Caballé and Grace Bumbry comprise the vocal sorority. They are a mismatched pair of sirens – Caballé plump as a fertility totem, Bumbry lean and serpentine; Caballé monumentally motionless inside a pair of pleated tents designed to blur the issue of her actual shape, Bumbry tigerishly restless; Caballé vocally plush and plummy, Bumbry harsher and more expressively strident.

Caballé plays Norma with an elephantine Spanish indolence. She flutters both sickle and dagger like a fan, and while singing weaves aerial arabesques with her fingers like a flamenco dancer. (The soldiers who led her eventually to the sacrificial pyre took the precaution of tying those fidgety hands behind her back, but by then it was too late.) Atop her head reposes a laurel crown, in place of a toca to anchor a mantilla. Bumbry meanwhile plays Adalgisa as an agitated virgin, the sibling of another operatic heroine of hers elsewhere in the Roman Empire, Strauss's Salome.

Dramatically, the ladies ought to swap roles. Caballé's most endearing quality of voice and presence is a refined listlessness quite incompatible with the ire and anguish of Norma. Sutherland, Covent Garden's previous Norma, subdued the impatient Druids by authoritarian vocal brilliance; Caballé soothes them by singing them to sleep. Whenever she particularly fancies a note she has emitted she holds on to it (while the conductor, his beat suspended, obsequiously waits), as if she's momentarily nodded off. The imperious Bumbry is a natural Norma, and can only reconcile herself to the demure Adalgisa by dramatising the character's indecision as a neurotic torment. Bumbry indeed arrived at Covent Garden disingenuously having learned the soprano version of her role, and as a result of the consequent textual squabble will graduate to Norma on 21, 24 and 27 July.

Caballé's first scenes were slovenly. 'Casta Diva' contained some ethereal gargling, but otherwise the sound was blowsy, notes snarled or curdled, and the pulse of the recriminatory trio was marred by a false entry. The second duet with Adalgisa was happier, because Caballé treats it as a singing lesson. The scales and trills are dazzling vocal exercises, not the tremors (as they were for Callas) of Norma's joy and distress. The finale, at last, was miraculously sung. By that stage passion is spent and Norma, forgiving Pollione and apologising to her father, has lapsed into that state of idyllic placidity which suits both Caballé's temperament and her slothfully lovely voice.

Television

Julian Barnes

Match That

My favourite television parable occurred some years ago during an innocent, bluff-your-way-to-a-few-quid quiz show. The panel were asked to watch three men conduct a small dance-band in the same popular tune, and then try to guess which of them was a genuine conductor. The three contestants, kitted out like posh pimps, duly waggled the baton, jogged up and down, and smiled like hairdressers, while exactly the same noises came three times from the band. The panel were stumped, the real conductor understandably galled, and one of the contestants – who turned out to be a bus-conductor – looked delighted, as if in the future he might be making more music than the dull ping of his clippie's bell.

This fable came back to me while watching Sir Charles Villiers being interviewed on *This Week* (Thames). As a grilling it wasn't too hot: Lew Gardner has one of those techniques which consist of reading off from his clipboard a deliberately rude question, waiting for the reply, making a single, snide crack if he can think of one, and then reading off another over-the-top question; it is the interviewer, not his subject, who ends up looking the overpaid despot. But the interesting part was how Sir Charles brought to mind the case of the bus-conductor. If he and two other Sevenoaks-faced gents were asked the same questions, and you had to guess which one was head of British Steel, you'd never pick Sir Charles. You'd take him for a golf-club secretary doing his damnedest to play the game the way those television chappies asked him to:

> If I have three half-pint pots in front of me, that represents demand; and here I have a quart pot – that's *two* pints – which represents capacity. So if I pour the big pot into the other pots it goes all over the table and that's the problem.

You also wouldn't have picked him because of the implausibly rosy picture he painted of things at BSC: relations with the unions, with government, and among management are all, it seems, hunky-dory. Finally, twiddling his baton while the band played on regardless, Sir Charles announced that BSC would break even by 1980.

Still, pigs do sometimes fly; matured cynicisms can be overturned. As a case in point, I've had to revise this week my longstanding belief that television has no effect whatsoever on life. I did this on the eleventh day of *Wimbledon* (BBC-1 and 2), when I went off to play tennis myself. Normally, I'm a sort of reliable, undemonstrative, modest winner on grass, clay and tarmac; but even casual exposure to the mannerisms of the TV champs, I found, had confounded and mocked my game. I was blowing on my hand after the first point (a double-fault by my opponent), and then kept trying, despite a high wind, to play stop-volleys off smashes, and make delicate cross-court dinks when the whole of the court was wide open. I struck my hip in frustration and petulantly queried line decisions. Most absurd of all, when my tenacious but diminutive opponent was standing with his nose on the net, I eschewed the lob as cissy, believing instead that the watching millions would prefer a dazzlingly rolled backhand top-spin passing-shot. Fortunately, my opponent had been an avid viewer too: his racket restrung to 85lbs à la Borg, his temper restrung à la Nastase, he found himself incurably addicted to the two-fisted top-spin lob, with which, all afternoon, in a doomed fashion, he tirelessly peppered the chickenwire surrounding the court.

On the box this year, while the tennis seemed less good than usual, the coverage was definitely worse. There are now almost no visits to the once much-loved interview room (are the stars too greedy?). Dan Maskell remains a decent link-man, but he fluffs a fair amount, and is dauntingly human in his predictions (Wade to beat Evert); while his companions even make you regret the old 'noo tennis balls' days of Jack Kramer. To my ears, John Barrett and Mark Cox have very similar voices, so that without a 'What do you think, Mark? Well, John' intro, I'm lost. I know, for instance, that it was Cox who said of Gerulaitis, 'For him the ball's never dead until it's bounced twice'; but I'm not sure whom to blame for the excited cry, as the camera zoomed in on a couple huddled under an umbrella, of 'Well, that's certainly *one* way to keep dry.' I did, however, note that both of them displayed the misleading partisanship of sentimental old losers when it came to Borg v. Okker, both rooting for Okker in the face of all observable reality. 'Borg being forced to make some good shots, but not enough to break serve' was the hopeful Cox-Barrett comment as the champ changed ends at 6-4, 5-4, with his own service to come.

Surprisingly, Sunday night's most vulgar event wasn't Ken Russell's return to television (which I'll come to next week), but Lord Grade's two-hour 'celebration' of female suf-

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frage, *Golden Gala* (LWT). It was worth watching, though, for the three-second sight of Lady Isobel Barnett being heckled. What is it about Lady Isobel that always makes you want to slurp your coffee, scratch your armpits and soil the doilies? There she was, standing straight as a duchess with the cutest flyaway spectacles, telling us all how the milestone of equality had now been passed and thank goodness we ladies could now stop being strident and militant and shrill, when . . . my goodness, there was a burst of strident, militant and shrill catcalls from 'ladies' in the audience. The hecklers were unfair only in that they could have opened up at any other point with almost as much justification. No half-way contemporary view of women can fit with the garrotting traditions of showbiz – chorus-line bum-wagglings, the Beverley Sisters, and the belief that women's rights mean largely the right to tell Irish jokes and blue one-liners on screen. This grim event closed with the triumph of irrelevant 'biz: Pet Clark singing the theme from *Jesus Christ Superstar*.

Jazz

Charles Fox

Heart in Mouth

Bracknell Jazz Festival

The night-time always used to be the right time as far as listening to jazz was concerned. It was an indoor activity too, very much a pendant to dancing or drinking, part of a life-style rather than an art form. Yet earlier on, in New Orleans as distinct from New York or Chicago, jazz got played in the open air – even in bright sunshine. Picnics, funerals, dances by the lakeside: the music existed just as naturally in those settings as in the brothels of Storyville (patrons could, it seems, take a pianist upstairs as well – to play fast rags or slow blues, whatever the action called for).

There's nothing incongruous, therefore, about jazz being played in a tent, even if Bracknell lacks the raffishness of New Orleans two-thirds of a century ago and the music was for pondering rather than cavorting to. Jazz festivals pop up elsewhere (Middlesbrough has one the weekend after this), but these usually lean heavily on Americans (the line-up for Chichester in October comes close to being the jazz equivalent of a Kerry Packer eleven). The satisfying truth about the Bracknell Festival, though, is that it is about music rather than reputations. And – highly refreshing, this – it treats British performers as seriously as those from across the herring-pond.

A new work seems to get commissioned every year, using Arts Council funds. This time it was the turn of John Taylor; the composition made cunning use of his Octet, with Henry Lowther's trumpet surfacing shinily in a Mexican-style middle section. There was, too, the first public coming-together of Stan Tracey and John Surman. Whether sounding flaky and fragile on bass clarinet or coaxing improbably high, shrill notes out of his baritone saxophone, Surman stayed at full, lyrical stretch, balancing Tracey's staccato chording. It was a meeting of two composers as much as of two improvisers.

Bobby Wellins is a diminutive Scots tenor saxophonist with a unique sound, a kind of sumptuous keening. Somewhere along the way he has acquired added bite and attack; so much so that a newcomer approaching the marquee during the set by Wellins's Quartet was deceived into thinking he was hearing a trumpet. But if Wellins has honed and expanded a classic style, Great Jazz Solos Revisited (simultaneously a 10-piece band and a statement of intent) wanders into the past, performing Bernie Cash's transcriptions of historic choruses. The repertoire takes in Charlie Parker's 'Scrapple From the Apple' (1947), Charlie Christian's 'Star Dust' (1939), even, but suitably defluffed, Louis Armstrong's 'Struttin' With Some Barbecue' (1927). The idea is not new (Tommy Dorsey's brass section used to play Bunny Berigan's solo on 'Marie' long after the trumpeter had left the band, while Supersax has moved in on Charlie Parker's legacy). Nostalgia gets evaded, partly by the inclusion of brand-new solos by Peter King (alto sax), Rigby Fairweather (trumpet) and Dave Cliff (guitar).

These happenings all took place in the big marquee. Elsewhere, bands were being coached and rehearsed; eclectic little groups toted their amplifiers into the Cellar Bar. Upstairs, on Sunday, a fistful of pianists (the Festival's phrase) strutted their stuff. Howard Riley's half-hour set was a tour-de-force, working its way through a range of modern piano techniques. For most people, however, the turn-up for the book was Peter Jacobsen, who brought wit and relevance even to that boring old business of plucking the piano strings. Jacobsen, like Riley, was concerned with rhythms rather than rhythm; he even combined funkiness with a classical stance. (Just to boast a moment: Jacobsen got his first-ever review – he was 16 and still at school – in the NS a dozen years ago.)

All the American ensembles on display were relatively unfamiliar. Most meticulous were the Pat Metheny Group and the Leroy Jenkins Trio. Metheny, a 23-year-old guitarist who used to work with Gary Burton, leads a quartet that is vastly more exciting and convincing in the flesh than on record, where the blandness gets over-emphasised. Leroy Jenkins, in his mid-forties, must be the most accomplished black jazz violinist since Eddie South. (Athough frequently compared with Stuff Smith, he lacks Smith's cheery egotism, his obsessive drive.) South's music can be dry, making – at first, anyway – excessive use of modern compositional practices. Things loosened up just after midnight, although the head stayed ascendant over the heart, even in the piano playing of Anthony Davis (nevertheless, his right foot stomped out four-to-the-bar) and Thurman Barker's faintly clinical drumming. What overwhelmed was Jenkins's technical bravura, his Tatum-like concern with detail.

Heart, of course, is what Ornette Coleman's music has always had, even if Coleman's feats as an innovator are usually what get written about. On the alto saxophone (not the trumpet, never the violin), Coleman can zoom in with the emotional directness of a great blues player. A pity this virtue gets obscured by his present group. The extra drummer and two guitarists (there's a bass guitar as well, of course) just clutter up the background. Chording can even make Coleman sound out-of-tune. When the guitarists stuck to riffs things improved, especially in the rousing finale, rather like a hora or some other Near or Middle Eastern dance. One missed the equality, the to-and-fro tugging, of the earlier quartets and trios. (Ironically enough, immediately before this set, three British performers – John Stevens, Trevor Watts, Barry Guy – operated stunningly within what might be called Coleman's older manner.)

The proposition that more means worse applies particularly to free jazz. Which may explain the rush – in America, anyway – to give one-man recitals. David Murray, one of the new generation of young black players, did that at Bracknell, blowing his tenor saxophone, prowling the stage, occasionally reciting a little homily, all for close on an hour. Just as a young mainstreamer might elect to play like Ben Webster, Murray goes back to the early 1960s, taking Albert Ayler's mixture of melody, rhythm and tonal distortion as his starting-point. Like Ayler's own great inspirer, Sonny Rollins, always more interested in tunes than chords, Murray evolves startling yet essentially romantic variations (one was built round that scrap of holy writ – for tenor players – 'Body and Soul'). It's a fascinating demonstration of how what was once resolutely avant-garde can, if it possesses real staying-power, become the pivot for a new tradition.

Art

John Spurling

Canvas Clowns

Jasper Johns *Hayward Gallery, until 30 July*

Jasper Johns made his name in 1958 with paintings of the American flag, targets, Arabic numerals and letters of the alphabet. Four years earlier he had destroyed all the previous work in his possession and dreamed that he saw himself painting a large American flag. The break was more imagined than real. The surviving earlier works — not in this show but reproduced in Michael Crichton's excellent *Jasper Johns* (Thames and Hudson £15) – contain many of the elements that persist into the later ones: pieces of printed paper, grids, numerals, a plaster-cast in a neatly-constructed wooden box, collage, the ready-made image and the use of encaustic. It is this rare technique – the mixing of paint or collage materials with hot wax so as to achieve a kind of thick transparency, the successive layers of the painting all remaining semi-visible – which makes the flag and target paintings so very much more than they appear in reproduction. Johns has little in common with such superficial exploiters of the ready-made image as Andy Warhol (whose latest work is on show at the ICA) and Richard Hamilton (selector of the current *The Artist's Eye* exhibition at the National Gallery).

In 1976 Johns collaborated with Samuel Beckett on one of those exceedingly expensive collectors' books, *Foirades/Fizzles*. The book itself is not being shown at the Hayward, but its two end-papers are, in the form of an oil

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painting called *End Paper*. The left half of the canvas consists of a basket-work design of green, orange and purple cross-hatchings, interspersed with grey, while the right half is a crazy-paving of black and red irregular shapes, marbled with grey and green. But although both suggest classic end-papers they are actually variations on motifs used in most of Johns's recent paintings and derive originally from a car he saw decorated with cross-hatchings and a painted wall in Harlem. The painter of *End Paper* is as economical in his re-use of motifs as the author of *Endgame*.

There are many parallels between Johns and Beckett – their elegance, their taste for intellectual jokes, their solipsism – but the most immediately striking is their uncompromising literalness. You wait for Godot, you look at the flag. Everything depends, then, on technique and for both artists technique is the real subject of their work. As Vladimir and Estragon or Hamm and Clov are first and foremost dramatic characters, the voices in the playwright's head, his masters and servants, so Red, Blue and Yellow figure constantly in Johns's pictures as the painter's masters and servants, his inexorable primary colours. In *False Start*, with a supporting cast of secondary colours, they burst in a firework display and at the same time are named in stencilled letters all over the canvas, the two levels of their existence, actual and conceptual, seldom coinciding, since even if a patch of blue is labelled BLUE, the letters themselves are coloured orange. In the companion painting, *Jubilee*, the colours themselves have gone to ground, leaving behind their names and a washed-out firework-display of black and white: a very Beckettian scene, especially with that title.

Everywhere Johns goes his primary colours go with him, like a trio of clowns, playing a whole repertoire of galumphing tricks among themselves, naming themselves, not naming themselves, making a token appearance or being conspicuous by their absence, standing on their heads or turning themselves inside-out, taking on three dimensions or becoming the mere shadows of themselves. And bit by bit they draw most of the other contents of Johns's studio with them, wires, rulers, tape-measures, cutlery, cups, half a chair, old tins, beer-cans and even aspects of the artist himself in the form of hand and foot-prints.

But inventive and entertaining as the clowns and their circus-animals are, they convey also a sense of melancholy amounting sometimes to despair: 'I can't go on; you must go on.' The ultimate narrowness of the repertoire and the apparent impossibility of ever extending it – though Johns does constantly extend it, like Beckett, in the teeth of his own fastidious lack of self-confidence – are compounded with the pointlessness of the task (why write, why paint, why entertain, why live?) to make every finished canvas an End Paper and every fresh one a False Start.

Derek Mahon

In a Sussex Pub

'I caught four sole this morning,'
said the man with the beard;
clouds shifted and a sun-
shaft pierced the sea.
Fisher of sole, did you reflect
the water you walked on
contains so very many souls,
the living and the dead,
you could never begin to count them?

Somewhere a god waits,
rod in hand,
to add you to their number.

Films

John Coleman

Egg-Box

Hullabaloo Over Georgie and Bonnie's Pictures *'The South Bank Show' (LWT), 15 and 22 July, 10.15 pm*
Thank God It's Friday (A) *Columbia; Odeons, Kensington and Chelsea*
Straight Time (X) *Warner 4; Scene, Leicester Square; ABCs Fulham Road and Bayswater*
Blacks Britannica *Scala, 25 Tottenham Street*
Russian 'Eccentrics' *National Film Theatre, 14-31 July*

It's an unfortunate title and what am I doing reviewing it anyway? Properly, it would be the perk of my colleague, J. Barnes. But, in truth, this is a film-film, which – one trusts – will in due course be shown in a cinema, as I saw it. The magnificent trio of James Ivory, American director, Ismail Merchant, Indian producer, and Ruth Prawer Jhabvala, novelist and scriptwriter, have come up with a – how shall I put it? – manner of impeccable lightweight, quite beautiful Jamesian movie. Since their next project is *The Europeans*, the very least one could say of this is that it augurs well. In fact, it exists in Mrs Jhabvala's write; and in everything, direction, Walter Lassally's photography, some finely modulated performances, it exhales exotic, credible life. It is very much an East meets West event. *Hullabaloo* (oh, well) is the only babu or off-key thing about it, for elsewhere it delightfully catches a greedy cross-culture unease.

A young Maharaja has a cellared cache of paintings, exquisite miniatures: he is Georgie (Victor Banerjee) and he simply believes in hanging on to them, not for money or even to look at: they are part of his heritage. His sexy, sari-clad, etched-mouthed and Western-minded sister, Bonnie (the ravishing, haughty Aparna Sen), finds this nonsense and is prepared to sell. There are two nicely contrasted would-be buyers, a cocksure, youthful American, Haven (Larry Pine) and the kind of crazy lady who lived – relatively unscathed – with Arabs in the 18th and 19th centuries. Peggy Ashcroft here proves there is nothing like a Dame as Lady G., a breezy old bird who knows her India backwards and is doing her impolite and grand damndest to purchase the miniatures for a domestic museum. She has a travelling companion, a girl called Lynn (Jane Booker), and I am not too sure about this latter-day hippie's affair with the maharaja, but let it pass. Stay in and see this enchanting film. It is both worldly and well-mannered and we are currently short of manners in life and art. It also has a pleasing and trustable double-twist at the end, worth waiting for.

Robert Klane's *Thank God It's Friday* ties in here because it is a bit like a teenager's vision of *Roseland*, which you may recall was the last Ivory-Merchant-Jhabvala creation. It rather evidently further shows its affiliations with *Saturday Night Fever*. It's an egg-box fiction, by which I intend it has a lot of little sub-plots, couples who you know are going to turn out nice again after potential disasters, converging on a disco night-club, The Zoo, in Hollywood, where a new black jockey is running in and there is to be a dance contest – as well as one of those loud, famous groups I have never heard of, in this case the Commodores. Well, many of my fellow-reviewers came out yawning or raging, but I have to admit to a pretty jolly time. I knew everything was going to come up roses for almost everyone and the script didn't seem half bad – as opposed to those which crop up with screaming regularity and could have been written with a thumb on a thumb-nail or vice versa. There is a simply terrific dance-sequence performed by one Chick Vennera, on car-tops, down lamp-posts, a virtuoso item of choreography, and there are at least a few killing lines. 'Disneyland with tits,' says a disgruntled lad, rejecting the joint. There are funnier than that, but I must scurry on.

Ulu Grosbard's *Straight Time* is so straight it is rigid. The only conceivable interest in this enterprise is the presence of Dustin Hoffman, who here has long hair and looks really grown-up for the first time I can remember. He also has a moustache, which probably helps. It's the very old one about an ex-con who never had a chance, as the dying or dead last frames heavily underline. Hoffman is the US equivalent of a Borstal boy, but the piece never makes its mind up whether he is basically decent or a shit. For my money, he's a shit. There is a quite skilfully contrived jewelry-store robbery sequence and Hoffman is lent fake sympathy by acquiring the sort of acquiescent girl most of us red-blooded viewers would give our all for and to. Her name is Theresa Russell and she cheered me up no end. Otherwise, I must have missed the point.

David Koff's *Blacks Britannica* may (nay, does) have an abominable pun in its title, but is the most shocking short (57 minutes) length of polemic about being black in Britain that I have ever seen. It made me think how little I had thought, as a tea-cosy liberal. It wins for re-think by doing the obvious, intelligent thing: settling the camera, for the most part, on greatly articulate blacks who are extremely angry and seemed to me to make thunderous points about the different, everyday levels at which they were persecuted by our system. I wish I had more space to quote, since this is essentially a telly-reportage of great and, of course, loaded (Union Jack, fuzz, Enoch) force. 'They don't like difference,' is a mild specimen of the sort of talk that emerges. They, unless you are black, is you, me. I like to think that, roughly a million years ago, I coined the phrase 'falling over blackwards', or being hypocritically apologetic when in the presence of a Negro. Christ, I was never a slave-trader. And I know damn well my dad wasn't. So I learned, in Chicago, you were allowed to dislike people of another colour: it was the honester thing to do if they were bastards, after all. One cannot be responsible for the history of unaccountable forebears. But . . . *Blacks Britannica* is good enough to make that 'but' stick.

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There is a rather zany Russian season at the NFT, just opened. I highly recommend Boris Barnet's 1927 *Girl With The Hatbox*, which has the infinitely inviting, soft and pouty mouth of Anna Sten opening and shutting: who needs titles?

Sport

Russell Davies

Out of Shape

I watched the Wimbledon Men's Final in the company of an itinerant yoga instructor who has been out of touch with TV and professional sport for an intimidating length of time. While suitably impressed by the young master's control, he was appalled by the physique that went with it. 'Look at that back!' he would cry, every time Borg plodded back to the service line after his latest looping triumph. 'Look what it's doing to his shoulders!' It was true enough. The shoulders were being forced forward into the standard simian Incredible Hulk shape by the two great curves of sail-shaped muscle that constitute the champion's lumbar region. 'And think what that's doing to his lungs!' continued the Poona-trained sage in horror. It was hard to deny that he had a point. If at some stage young Borg began to develop a chest to match the rest of his body, his lungs would have nowhere to go. Squashed flat from back and front, they would wither and perish like old hot water bottles. By which time, however, Borg would doubtless have sprouted a fine set of pimpled gills.

The ladies show fewer signs of overdevelopment so far, though I surely can't have been the only watcher to be both impressed and appalled by that long wire – is it a vein? – that runs down the upper racket arm of the Navratilova. A truly Wagnerian limb, this. Almost Maskelline. My own choice, the Evert, looked a bit superfatted by comparison (as Navratilova did the previous year). Dan Maskell kept saying that the 'competitive edge' wasn't there, and what he told us ten times turned out to be true: even on Finals Day there wasn't an edge to be seen on the buttery Evert flesh. The shame of this particular tournament was the unlucky elimination of Mrs Cawley, who played, for the brief time I saw her, well enough to make nonsense of any claim that such-and-such another player was a 'natural'. Mrs Cawley displayed a touch, especially on low forehand volleys which are very difficult to make appear anything but anguished and improvised, that made almost everyone else at Wimbledon look tutored rigid – even Borg, wonderfully well though he finally played. Incidentally, I am assured by a Swedish speaker (the charming consort of the yoga teacher) that 'g' in that language, when preceded by an 'r' in a word of one syllable, is pronounced 'y'. If this information is to be believed, we should all be calling the Wimbledon champion Bjorn Bory. I suspect that Jimmy Connors is already doing this.

If I had misspent my youth properly, I would have seen something of the great champion who died this week, Joe Davis. But though his name was outstanding among those fascinating few – John Pulman, Walter Donaldson – whose mysterious 'frames' were recorded day by day in the Radio Sports News of my infancy (I took notice because Joe's brother Fred lived just round the corner), I never got inside a hall to see Joe play. So what I always liked about him was his marvellous comedian's face: a Tweedledum & Tweedledee face, pear-shaped and smiling as though in the immediate afterglow of a large but comfortably digestible meal. It was the sort of face, like Louis Armstrong's, or the old Hollywood-Irish actor Thomas Mitchell's, that you would find yourself smiling back at, for no reason at all. Yet it was Fred Davis who showed forth the entertainer's twinkly temperament – a reaction, probably, and a wise one, to the problem of being 13 years younger than one's World Champion brother. Snooker is only just beginning to be written about bearably, so the literature on Joe Davis will hardly do him justice – but taking down the encyclopaedia nearest to this desk, I find the necessary stated, under 'Snooker': 'The greatest player was Joe Davis, world prof. champion 1927-40 and 1946.'

Spurs have spent three quarters of a million pounds on two Argentinian internationals: an act of typically endearing recklessness, and not entirely unexpected. Ever since Kevin Kiegmann went to Hamburg, I have been waiting to see the work-permits pile up in the in-trays of the FA. I have an idea the appeal of Ardiles was at least half aesthetic: he is a neat, long-thighed player with a nice gliding run, and may live to see his patent-leather hair much imitated up the Seven Sisters Road. Whether his game will endure an average English winter, and we know how average they can get, is the £375,000 question. His mate Villa, who will not get through two games without being nicknamed Pancho, Aston and (current favourite) Poly by various tabloids, can look after himself, and seemed to spend quite a lot of World Cup time doing exactly that. I hope he does not decide too early that his size is of more use to him in the English First Division than his skill.

Is this a revolution in recruitment, a first onrush of Greenwoodist open-mindedness among English managers? I shan't believe it until we sign on an overseas goalie, thereby casting away for ever our happy illusion that all foreign keepers are cross-eyed, fat and mental.

Weekend Competition

No 2523 **Set by Al Fresco**

A few weeks ago, an ad in the NS for HMSO books was headed:

BATTERED WOMEN
HOME FREEZERS
TOWER OF LONDON

A pretty tale, isn't it? Now it must be possible to arrange the titles of three well-known books in such an order that they tell their own story. Up to five shots each; by 28 July.

Result of No 2520 **Set by Little Keith**

We wanted verses on the Scottish effort in Argentina.

Report **by The Lemon Kid**

I put the lemon on all the McGonagall entries this week, because frankly I couldn't be bothered to read them. On the other hand, I lifted the long-standing lemon on handwritten efforts, which was pretty white of me, I think you'll agree. A large number of verses from beyond the Wall, many of them ringing with the authentic Tartan tone of aggressive disappointment. Honourable mentions to Norman Buchan ('Timor Cubillas conturbat me') and Robert Baird (for a nice pun on SFA). A Wellington and a Newton for the winners (Burns, MacDiarmid, Dunn, Burns, Sempill and Stevenson). Over to you, Spiro, my stern yet wise master.

SPIRO KEATS *writes:* My attention has been drawn to Fatboy's incautious Report of 7 July (accept this bounty, O Little Big Keith). The whole affair has been dealt with now . . . rain at dawn in the prison-courts, a babbling Fatboy led to the pock-marked wall, the fog-muffled reports of the muskets, that one rubber dummy twanging into Fatboy's ungrateful mush, the Complex faithful crackling happily away over the broken teeth and cartilage . . . Got to keep at them, you know.

O saw ye Ally's army bold
Gea off tae fight the foe,
As tae anither Bannockburn,
Wi' faces a' aglow?

And saw ye then these wearie men
Return tae hearth and hame,
As if fra' Flodden's stricken field
On Scotia's day o' shame?

O waly waly puir MacLeod,
Our hearts wi' grief are fu',
Till seas gang dry we'll ne'er forget
Ye couldna beat Peru.

STANLEY J. SHARPLESS

Whit's aw this Argentinian clishma clavering
O'er twenty-two weel-barbered, weel-confetted loons?
It's practicalities we should be savouring
No' 'phemeral fancies and sich fol derols o' weans.

Only a nation tamed tacks glory to a game
We're like a prisoner clamped up to anither's chain
Fair scunnered 'cos that gomeril's fleas outjumped our crew.

Croose Tam o' Shanters huv MacLeoded aw the issues.
Dumfooner'd, I think: It's aw we know aboot Iran.
Now till Spain (Spain!) we'll live on our Dutch-couraged tissues.
As though world tourneys gave a wholeness back to Man.

IAN SORLEY

All evening long the television sets
could be heard through open windows
the length of the empty street,
no cats or children playing there.

Over the worn cobblestones, concrete,
the yelp and buzz of commentators
gave counterpoint to the action,
aural hieroglyphics for passing tally men.

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A true tragedy is happening here,
behind the dirty sash windows,
though you might not recognise it
if you weren't a Scottish poet in exile.

When I was six the Blitz was on.
I gave away an airplane, was snubbed by
rich boys.
I thought that was the worst of it.
Ally, I was wrong. This is the worst.

ROY KELLY

Wee, creeshit, cowerin', quiverin' queenies!
O what the de'il pollutes our Genus
Wha gaed *hoot-toots* wi' braw demeanours
A' high-falutin
For tae defy yon Argenteenies
An' pit the boot in?

Holland ye beat, as was your dutie:
Iran ye drawn, yet barely drew tae:
Peru hae scorned ye tutti-frutti –
Ah, Willy-nilly,
Scotland, for a' your brawn an' beautie,
Ye're ay *sae* SILLY!

GINA BERKELEY

Scotland now may say alas!
For she hath lost her game and grace,
Despairing is our Ally's face,
As needs it must:
Once again the hopes of a race
Turn into dust.

And so defeat came at the last
As enemy goals came thick and fast.
There's nought to do but get well gassed;
Let's hit the malt,
For once again, as in the past,
It's England's fault.

N. J. HUNTER

We have heard you crowing, in phrases cheap
and trite –
A loud-mouth at morning and a know-all at night.
We have watched you basking in the sun of your
conceit,
Brimming with inanity, with vanity replete.

So let us now the exploits of your tartan
troops extol –
The fluffed midfield passes, the muffed shots
at goal:
To Ally's gallant army our loyal Tammies doff –
Bum slobs when *on* the field, dumb yobboes *off.*
No matter that your fancy talk has proved a lot
of cock;
No matter that you've made your land a
worldwide laughing stock;
It isn't for the *goals* he nets that you hand a
man the tiller –
You judge him now by what he nets by way of
Adman's Siller.

IAN KELSO

Tony Miles

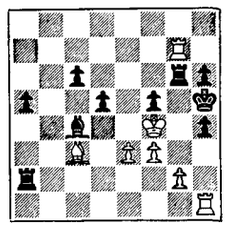
Chess

No 91 **Making Sense of Chess Books**

One of the perils of writing a chess column is that one periodically receives copies of new books for review. As a general rule I browse through anything the postman delivers, and, if it happens to be interesting, I may even write about it. Lately though, it seems to me, the general standard of chessbooks has declined markedly, both in production and diligence of analysis.

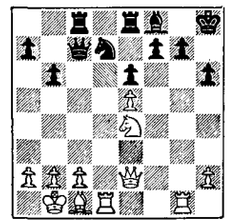
My favourite example is a recent publication which begins with a lesson in notation. The lesson contains a game score, and, near the end, a diagram for the reader to check that he has followed it correctly. Unfortunately, not only does the score contain mistakes, but also the diagram is wrong. On further perusal I found 50 (!) more mistakes.

Inspired by this, and with apologies to the author, I would like to offer a short, light-hearted quiz on understanding chess books!



Question 1 (see diagram): For the last page White has been playing wonderfully, shedding three pawns for a winning attack. He now concluded brilliantly, mating in 3.
(a) How? (b) What's wrong?

Question 2: After 1.N-KB3, N-KB3; 2.P-KN3, P-KN3; 3.P-N3, B-N2; 4.B-QN2, P-B4; 5.B-N2, N-B3; 6.0-0, P-Q4; 7.P-Q4, PxP; 8.QxP?
(a) "How does Black exploit White's mistake?" The helpful author adds "You will need to find more than one good move to prove White's eighth was a mistake." (b) Correct Question 2. (c) Solve Question 2.

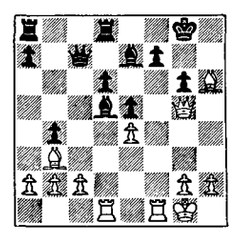


Question 3 (see diagram): (a) "Can you see how White wins by force . . .?" (b) ". . .and the defence to the try 1.BxP?" (c) Given that the 'solution' is "1.RxN, QxR; 2.N-B6! and if 2 . . .PxN; 3.Q-N2 or N4 or if, say, 2 . . .Q-B2; 3.QxRPch! PxQ; 4.R-N8 mate. If 1.BxRP!?, P-N3! may defend" can you work out what the diagrammed position should be?

Answers

1. (a) "1.B-B6!! RxB; 2.P-N3 any 3.RxP mate" (b) 1 . . .RxR and Black wins.
2. (a) 8. . .NxQ perhaps (b) Omit 5 . . .N-B3; 6.0-0 (c) 8 or rather 7 . . .N-R4; 8.Q-R4ch, P-N4! 9.Q-R3, P-N5; 10.Q-R4ch, B-Q2 wins.
3. (a) Personally, not clearly, but 1.BxP looks worth a try. (b) Oh! Again, not clearly. On 1.BxP, P-N3; simply 2.BxB, RxB; (NxB, N-Q6) 3.N-Q6, QR-Q1 4.P-KR4 looks very strong. (c) Personally, no. The only square from which the queen could get to KN2,KN4 and KR6 is KR3 but then 1.RxN allows mate by 1 . . .QxPch.

Score one point for each correct answer. If you scored 8 Well done Tim! 5-7: You have great patience, and if you would care to send a stamped addressed envelope I would be pleased to recommend further reading matter. 0-4: Have you ever considered writing a chess book?

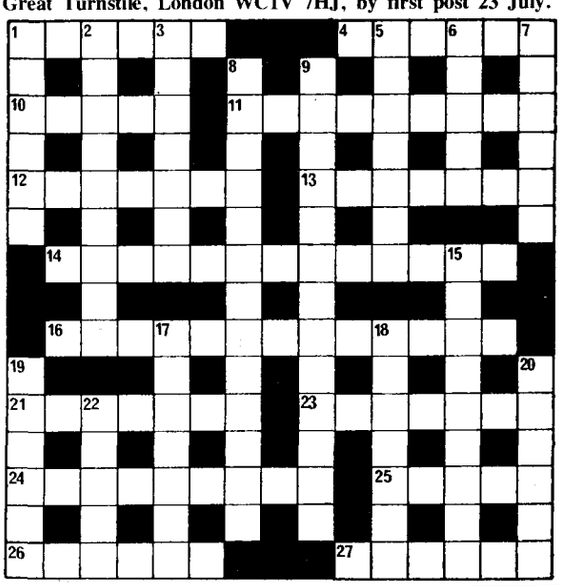


Problem 91
White to play. How should the game go? Answers to me at the NEW STATESMAN postmarked not later than 26 July.

Solution to Problem 89
Bad 1.R-KB1! draws. The game went 1.P-N8=Q? P-B7ch; 2.K-R1, P-N7ch; 3.K-R2, P-N8=Qch 4.RxQ, N-B6ch! 5.RxN (K-R3, P-N5ch!) P-B8=Qch Resigns.

Weekend Crossword 1269

PRIZES: Book tokens of £2 for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1269, New Statesman, Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7HJ, by first post 23 July.



ACROSS

1. Dances in the streets of Mayfair behind the Turk's Head (6).
4. Conqueror who is heard to be a farmer (6).
10. A ruler comes back carrying a duck to put in the oven (5).
11. Precipitate producer (9).
12. Sums relatives hold a short time (7).
13. Rich man who is in Devon as sister calls (7).
14. No, music is not a substitute for the holy (13).
16. They enable one to see the world on a plane (13).
21. Mocker with something worthless in his laughter (7).
23. Virtue shown by the son they spoiled (7).
24. Mark of one who is half a settler (9).
25. Exercise which makes healthy look vanish (5).
26. Burn about fifty for the sake of one (6).
27. Agreement of workers about starting a strike (6).

DOWN

1. A sailor without skill becomes an unruly person (6).
2. Beloved in gratitude without the scent turning up (9).
3. Giant I beat in less than a moment (7).
5. Pitman I used for the instrument (7).
6. Enjoys stories about a king (5).
7. A sign of religion being on the other side (6).
8. Used in the bedroom it gives southern birds elegant make-up (13).
9. A man with a duck but no plump poultry is a tragic hero (5, 2, 6).
15. Revolts which are opening up by force in America (9).
17. To one sort of type a little Liberal is in the news (7).
18. No money back after a call for a West Country town (7).
19. Openings for a man with something to be published (6).
20. Business man who keeps Tony company (6).
22. Ordinary type (5).

SETSQUARE

Solution to No 1267

S	E	D	U	C	E	R		C	L	A	P	H	A	M
C	R	O		O		A		N		I		E
R	E	A	L	M		C	O	N	D	U	C	T	O	R
A		I		A		K		T		B		C		I
T	E	N	E	T	S		F	I	N	I	S	H	E	D
C		P		O		C		L		S				E
H	A	I	L	S	T	O	N	E	S		O	W	E	N
		P		E		R		V		A		H		
A	P	E	X		F	I	R	E	E	N	G	I	N	E
R				G		N		R		T		T		L
I	N	S	U	L	A	T	E		P	I	N	E	R	O
A		O		A		H		S		M		B		P
D	E	F	E	N	S	I	V	E		O	R	A	T	E
N		A		C		A		N		I		R		
E	A	S	T	E	R	N		C	O	Y	O	T	E	S

Prizewinners to No 1267
W. F. Main (Birmingham)
Dr G. L. Bickler (Leeds)
L. J. Laurance (Harrow)

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Applications are invited for a post of negotiations officer. Experience in Civil Service or Public Sector trade union activity and of the Civil Service Whitley Council Machinery is desirable. Ability to communicate effectively is essential. The post will be located in Edinburgh.

The salary scale is £4,842, £4,995, £5,170, £5,345, £5,520, £5,718. Annual leave entitlement is thirty days and there is a non-contributory pension scheme. Retirement is compulsory at age 60.

Applications are invited for this appointment which should include particulars of age, educational qualifications, present and previous employment and Trade Union experience. These must be received not later than Wednesday 26 July, 1978 addressed to the **General Secretary, Society of Civil & Public Servants, 124/130 Southwark Street, London SE1 OTU** from whom application forms are available.

CIVIL SERVICE UNION

has a vacancy for an

ASSISTANT SECRETARY

Salary, taking account of age and experience will rise from £5,985 - £8,564.

Application form and further information from:

The General Secretary (AS), 14-21 Hatton Wall, London EC1N 8JP.

Closing date for return of application form: first post, **Monday 7 August 1978.**

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ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT – AP.2

(Salary c.£3,500)

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For application forms and further details contact the **Personnel Office, 109 The Grove, Stratford E15 1EN. (Tel.: 01-555 0811. Ext. 32) quoting ref: A.551/78.** Closing date: 28 July 1978.

ONE OR TWO PEOPLE NEEDED to join residential team running small conference centre in Blackheath SE10. To work in wholefood cooking/organic gardening/maintenance. Please ring 01-692 3620 or write: Dartmouth House, Dartmouth Row, SE10.

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We need someone to run office for Book Club promoting contemporary novels. Own typing, sub-editing experience and a good eye for administrative detail required. Salary £3,000-£3,500 per annum.

Please write to: **Stanley Jackson, NEW FICTION SOCIETY, 7 Albermarle Street, London W1X 4BB.**

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POLYTECHNIC OF WALES STUDENTS' UNION

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PERMANENT SECRETARY

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Further details are available by writing to the above address or by telephoning Pontypridd (0443) 402173 during office hours before 21st July, or Hengoed (0443) 812895 after 6.00 p.m. (all dates).

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DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

RESEARCH FELLOW/SENIOR RESEARCH FELLOW: The Head of the Department is Professor J. D. B. Miller. Acting Head (until August) is Dr T. B. Millar.

The Department is interested in a wide range of international questions, both practical and theoretical. Preference for this appointment will be given to someone qualified in the international relations of East and South-East Asia, in the politics of the international economy, and/or in international theory.

The appointment will be for three years in the first instance, with a possible extension to five years. Further information may be obtained from Professor J. D. B. Miller (at St John's College, Cambridge until August) or Dr T. B. Millar in Canberra.

CLOSING DATE: 4 AUGUST 1978

SALARIES: Salary for the posts of Research Fellow/Senior Research Fellow is in accordance with qualifications and experience within the range Research Fellow $A15,179 — $19,813. Senior Research Fellow $A21 201 — $25,289 per annum. Current exchange rates $A1 : 62p : $US1.13.

OTHER CONDITIONS: Reasonable appointment expenses are paid. Superannuation benefits are available. Assistance with housing is provided for an appointee from outside Canberra.

The University reserves the right not to make an appointment or to make an appointment by invitation at any time.

Prospective applicants should obtain further particulars from the ASSOCIATION OF COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITIES (Appts), 36 GORDON SQUARE, LONDON WC1H OPF.

UNION OF STUDENTS, University of Warwick wish to appoint a Permanent Secretary on scale £5,954-£7,308 p.a. (under review). Relative experience and an understanding of Student Unions is essential for this senior appointment. Further information and application forms available from the President, Union of Students, University of Warwick, Coventry, CV4 7AL (0203 27406). Final date for receipt of applications 27 July. Interviews will be held during the second week in August.

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Accom. Vacant cont. p.67

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CSV

CSV

CSV's principal objective is to involve people in community service and to encourage social change. Our main task is with the young; involvement should enable them to help the community and develop their own potential.

Project Co-ordinator:
SPRINGBOARD, KENT

Community Service Volunteers in partnership with Kent County Council Social Services Department is sponsoring a Youth Opportunities Scheme funded by the Manpower Services Commission. Springboard will be based in the Medway Towns and offer unemployed young people a wide range of community service opportunities.

We need an energetic and resourceful person to co-ordinate the setting up and running of the scheme, which will employ 70 people. Full back-up facilities will be provided.

The job demands effective liaison with the Manpower Services Commission, the Social Services Department, various local groups and the young people participating in the scheme. Other responsibilities include overseeing the finances, and the supervision and support of a book-keeper, secretary and 6 team leaders.

Salary will be on the NJC scale AP5/SO1 (£4344 - £5067 plus 9.94%) with a yearly renewable contract. Do not delay. *Contact Wendy Lovett.*

There is a possibility of a further post in South London. If you would be interested in this, *contact Wendy Gough*

Development Officer:
NORTHERN IRELAND

Following the appointment of Alan Gillespie as regional director for the Save the Children Fund, an officer is needed to develop CSV's work, establishing projects for full-time volunteers, recruitment, volunteer support and developing school-based community service schemes. Additionally in Northern Ireland CSV operates separately Younghelp, a programme for 200 unemployed young people and CART, a team recruiting volunteers for a wide range of agencies through radio and television.

The person appointed should be able to meet the special challenge of working in the area, have sound knowledge of the social services and good administrative ability.

The post reports to the Executive Director and is based at 41 University Street, Belfast. Salary on NJC SO1 scale (£4761 - £5067 plus 9.94%). Local Government pension scheme. Essential car user allowance.

Contact Wendy Gough

Volunteer Director:
LONDON

A Volunteer Director is needed to complete a team of twelve at our Headquarters. Volunteer Directors are responsible for the recruitment, interviewing and placement and for the support and encouragement of full-time CSV's throughout the UK. Their work also includes the development of new projects and new areas of work for volunteers.

We need people who can recognise and make use of the potential in the cross section of young people who come to CSV. The pressures of the job are heightened by the need to grasp new opportunities.

Have you got the drive, imagination and practical ability needed to further the involvement of young people in community service?

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Details and application form from Helen Keogh

Volunteer Director:
CHILDREN-IN-CARE, BOLTON

Eighteen months ago, Community Service Volunteers established a programme with 5 local authorities, to involve children-in-care in service to the community. Funded by the Department of Health and Social Security, it has already fruitfully involved approximately 200 young people in community service projects as an alternative to residential or custodial care.

A field-based Volunteer Director is now needed to work on the Bolton scheme. He or she will be expected to involve approximately 30-40 children-in-care in the age range 15-18 in full-time service each year. The post reports to Andrea Kelmanson, Co-ordinator of Special Projects.

Candidates need some experience of, or interest in, work with difficult adolescents; good administrative ability; imagination; tact and diplomacy. Salary is on NJC AP3 scale (£3396 - £3774 plus 9.94%). Local Government pension scheme. *Details and application forms from Eve Mason.*

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Vol. 96 No. 2469

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Theatres

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